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SANTINIKETAN
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VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume XI

1942

VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume XI

JULY, 1942

Number 1

We have completed a decade and with this issue the *Visva-Bharati News* enters upon the eleventh year of its existence. This monthly bulletin is by no means the pioneer venture by the Visva-Bharati in the line. Even before the inauguration of the Visva-Bharati in 1921 our asrama maintained for many years beginning from 1919 a monthly news-letter in Bengali called the *Santiniketan Patrika*. Its circulation in the first instance was limited only to such people as were intimately connected with the asrama and its activities. In the meantime the idea of the Visva-Bharati was gradually taking shape and it was felt that as the organ of the wider organization the circulation of the paper could no longer be so strictly limited. Accordingly from the following year the news-letter became a full-fledged magazine under the joint-editorship of Jagadananda Roy and Vidhushekhar Sastri. One of the regular features of the magazine was the news of the asrama. Its files, containing as they do, verbatim reports of all the sermons and addresses given by Gurudeva during that period, have become invaluable to all students of Gurudeva's literature. There is much material in it that is of interest to all those who want to gather information about the history and development of the asrama.

In 1923 appeared the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly* with Surendranath Tagore as its editor. By this time the Institution was no longer confined to Bengal; it had drawn to it members from every corner of India and from abroad. A monthly journal in Bengali was no longer adequate and the *Quarterly*, though it made it a point to circulate the news of the various activities of the asrama in the form of an appendix, was not within the reach of all. It was in these circumstances that the *Visva-Bharati News* originated. How far it has succeeded in serving the interests of the members of the Visva-Bharati and of the Asramika-Sangha we shall leave it to them to judge.

Although the exigencies of the war has compelled us to change the quality of the printing paper we like to hope that the loss has been more than compensated by the increase in the number of pages which has enabled us give more detailed information of the activities of the Visva-Bharati.

Santiniketan and Sriniketan

Sri Mahadev Desai writes as follows in the *Harijan* (May 24, 1942) :

Bombay has enabled Gandhiji to fulfil a debt that had weighed on him for over a year. Deenabandhu Andrews died on the 5th of April, 1940, and an appeal for a memorial to him was issued by among others the Gurudeva and Gandhiji. Before even a lakh of rupees could be collected, the Poet was removed from our midst, and ever since his death Gandhiji had been worrying over the poor response to the appeal. The circumstances in which he decided to visit Bombay are now well known.

The response was naturally expected, when Gandhiji himself decided to devote a week to the purpose, but there is no gainsaying the fact that with most of the donors regard for Gandhiji was a greater consideration than the purpose. A friend who was talking with Gandhiji, the other day frankly said to him : "Gandhiji, you are backing the wrong horse." It was in order to correct this wrong impression that Gandhiji explained to more than one donor that the cause was worthy of their generous support.

"I am not exaggerating," he said, "when I say that Shantiniketan is worthy of a greater support than the Bangalore Research Institute for which Tata gave Rs. 30 lakhs. I wonder if the Research Institute is known anywhere outside India. But the Shantiniketan is known wherever the Poet's name is known, and known as an institution that inspired the Poet's great poetry. The Poet

used to call it his toy or plaything, but his poesy would have been barren without the plaything. The Shantiniketan whose school of art and culture attracts students from far and near has produced painters and poets and scholars. There are among those who humbly serve it—a scholar like Kshitibabu and an artist like Nandababu, who are both unrivalled in their respective domains. And no institution of this type in India is managed with so little finance."

Our devotion to the Poet will remain as long as we live. But how can we have the same devotion for Shantiniketan ? How long will it last ?

"The institution which inspired the Poet received in its turn inspiration from the Poet, and you may be sure that there are people there who will devote their lifetime to its service. Shantiniketan is a romance. It grew out of the Poet's father's idea to find a home of peace and culture. It is a tragedy that monied men, who have gained so much from Shantiniketan, do not appreciate its full worth. The Poet is an asset for India and for the world for all time, and it is the duty of monied men to put his institution on a sound basis "

If Gandhiji appreciates Shantiniketan so much as a home of art, why does he himself have ashrama of a different character ? For the simple reason that art is the need of quite a fair number of our people and it must be fulfilled in a clean, wholesome and inexpensive way. Shantiniketan, with its

(Continued on page 10)

Letters of Rabindranath

By Buddhadeva Bose

Rabindranath is one of the world's most brilliant letter-writers, and perhaps the most profuse. Of the many thousand letters he must have written in his time, a great deal appears to be irrevocably lost—very few, indeed, of the letters of his youth have yet come to light. The collections of his letters that were so long accessible to us in book form, or were appearing in the pages of various journals were mostly *literary* letters, manifestly meant for the printer. This applies to the charming *Europeprabasir Patra* of his boyhood as well as to the Bhanusingha series of his late life, this latter being perhaps the high water mark of one type of Bengali prose. *Chhinnapatra* is an exception, they are personal and unpremeditated, but the selection was scrupulous in leaving out all details of personal life that might have appeared trivial to the readers of the last generation. It seems, moreover, that in the last phase of his life the Poet had practically ceased to write any letters that were really personal, and there are many letters of this period which might have been written to anybody, for the correspondent, in these cases, was merely a peg to hang his philosophical cloak on or just a passive recipient of a fine piece of literature. These are not really letters in the true sense of the word : they are essays—on life, letters, travel, nature or simply on nothing—in epistolary form, corresponding to that *genre* of English prose which today goes by the name of the 'personal' essay. The awareness that whatever he signs is likely to appear in print some time or other perhaps accounts for the highly literary and impersonal nature of his later letters. Their literary value is great, but the subtle flavour of the personal letter is not in them.

Yet his personal letters are of immense importance, and the Visva-Bharati has undertaken a great work in starting a series called *Chithipatra (letters)*, whose first volume has appeared on the Poet's last birthday. No idea could be happier, no memorial more apt in celebrating the 25th of Baishakh. This first volume contains thirty-six letters written by the Poet to his wife, and three by his wife to other correspondents. Unfortunately, not a single letter of the Poet's wife to him has survived these long years, and this, again, is the only batch of the Poet's letters to his wife that has come down to posterity. Thin as they are in volume, these letters reveal a new world and a new Rabindranath. These letters are simple, homely, conversational and intimate in the best sense of the word. Here it is not the great poet nor the great man who is speaking ; the accents are those of a normal man who has more than one grown-up daughter to marry, a son to educate, who is involved in multifarious domestic duties rising out of the needs of a large joint family, of a husband who complains of the wife's remissness in writing letters, of a father whose children often occupy his thoughts. Genius sometimes tends to verge on eccentricity, but Rabindranath was a great genius and a perfectly normal human being at the same time : his whole

life is a testament of sanity. But his human aspect has never before been so touchingly revealed as in *Chithipatra*. Reading through the pages, and reading between the lines, we can conjure up a complete picture of the man, who seems to be one like ourselves with all the little worries of day to day existence, but whom at the same time we feel to be different from us, to be living all the time on a higher plane of consciousness.

Another figure emerges out of these letters --that of the person to whom they were written. Hitherto, little had been known of the Poet's wife ; this was a subject on which he himself was particularly reticent. His writings, too, contain remarkably few passages which may be understood as having direct reference to her. She comes out at last in this little volume, a gracious, motherly woman, full of loving-kindness, ever willing to take up her position by the husband's side as the most trusted comrade. Her own letters in this volume would be cherished by all as a treasure of our literary history, and posterity will always regret that they are so few. And the Poet's incarnation as a loving, almost a fond husband and father will help future biographers to present him in a truly realistic shape.

Indeed, as this series progresses, more and more material will be forthcoming on which any true biography of the Poet must be built. In the Publisher's foreword to this volume we have been assured that the Visva-Bharati will spare themselves no pains in collecting all his letters, or as many as possible and bring them out in different volumes. We wish this project all success, and hope that the Poet's numerous correspondents (or their heirs) will fully co-operate with the Visva-Bharati in making letters accessible to them. There must also be a large number of letters Rabindranath had written to his friends in foreign countries ; it should be the duty of the Visva-Bharati to try and collect them when the war is over and bring them out in book form.

Our Santal Villages

Rathindranath Tagore

We have Santals not only as our neighbours but also as tenants of the Visva-Bharati. Their villages are nestled close together on the stretch of what was formerly a barren *danga* land lying between the asrama and Sriniketan. The colony started many years ago from a mere camping ground of a few of these wandering aborigines who won the admiration and love of Willie Pearson. His loving care of these few families drew others to come and settle there. Pearson with the help of some asrama boys played games with them, planted trees in the *danga* and started a school for their children. An eucalyptus tree and the school house still remain to perpetuate his association with these people. The village is befittingly called *Pearson Palli*. Since the Santals do not like to live in a crowded locality, with the advent of more settlers two other hamlets have grown close by. When the Visva-Bharati purchased land in the neighbourhood all the three villages came into our possession.

People may well ask what the Visva-Bharati is doing for these tenants of theirs. Are the Santal villages included in the programme of rural reconstruction carried on by Sriniketan? Yes, we have never lost interest in our friendly neighbours and have been fully alive to the added responsibility that has devolved upon us since they have become our tenants. A few facts may be of interest to our readers.

There are altogether about eighty families distributed amongst the three hamlets. To provide them with a means of living more than 500 bighas of waste-land have been converted into good arable land and parcelled out amongst these families for the cultivation of paddy and other crops. For the purpose of irrigation one 6" tube-well was sunk at considerable cost several years ago but failed to yield any water. During recent years bunds and tanks have been made wherever there is a prospect of holding rain water. We have only a few days ago completed a tank near the *Pearson Palli* which will serve to irrigate many bighas of paddy land.

Santals are not good agriculturists. Nevertheless we hope to be able to help these families to earn enough from their land so that they may learn to be economically independent. The chief obstacle in the carrying out of any plan of social or economic improvement amongst these people has been their willingness to be drafted as labourers into the Bolpur rice mills. The temptation is too great for them to resist, and once they fall victims, economic, social and moral degeneration takes place rapidly. Our workers have constantly to induce them to stay away from the mills by showing them the way to earn equally well from other pursuits. Besides cultivation and the growing of crops they have been encouraged to learn handicrafts at the Silpa-Bhavana. Three or four families have

learnt weaving, a few are expert carpenters and school boys are now trained regularly in mat-making. The keeping of cows, pigs, goats, sheep and poultry birds is encouraged. The Santal Rural Credit Society has been one of the best Co-operative Societies under the Visva-Bharati Central Co-operative Bank.

As was mentioned, Pearson had started the school. The house was erected partly from funds collected by him and partly by the free labour contributed by the villagers. Classes were held in the evenings by our asrama students who volunteered as teachers. Later on as the number of pupils grew a whole-time teacher was appointed one of whose qualifications was that he knew the Santali language very well. The school had recently to be shifted to another house which is more centrally situated. In the morning classes are held for the infants who have not reached the economic age which is often as low as eight years. Evening-classes are held for the grown ups i. e. those who have to work during the day. A football field lies close to the school and it is amusing to watch the whole male population often turning up and crowding into the field to join in the game with the boys. It is more of a melee than anything else ; but a kick at the ball is all the excitement they want. Our Brati-balak leader is well-pleased with the Santal boys. The Santal scouts, with their sleek ebony-coloured bodies, a piece of red cloth tied round their heads with a feather sticking in it, armed with bows and arrows and with their care free and cheerful appearance have won the admiration of many of our visitors who have chanced to see a Brati-balak rally. The words of command have been translated into Santali and it is a rare sight to see with what alacrity the orders are executed. Their elders, not suffering to be dwarfed in their martial spirit by the youngsters, have formed a company of defence force and during the last summer holidays produced consternation amongst the inmates by boldly marching in a formation right into the asrama—with lighted torches in their hands and the beating of war drums.

In our work among the Santals we have tried to avoid the common mistake that is made by missionary societies and against which scientists have repeatedly warned them. It would be absurd if we try to reform them and introduce amongst them standards of our own. Not that we have always succeeded in avoiding this mistake. One of workers had to be transferred to another village because in his enthusiasm he began unconsciously to "educate" them in the rules of society in which he himself has been brought up, not realizing that in the process he was breaking up a social code that is much more ancient than that of the Hindus. Our aim, as far as the Santals are concerned, is to help them to attain economic independence and prosperity, make them literate so that they are not made victims of the greedy *mahajans* and unscrupulous shop-keepers, make them understand the principles of sanitation and health, encourage traditional games and festivals and above all desist from doing anything to injure their own social organisation.

Letters With A Lesson

A. A.

While looking through the numberless files of Gurudeva's correspondence, and trying to select out of thousands of letters those which might in future be published in bookform, I chanced upon many letters written to him by children from all over the world.

There is something almost unbearably poignant about these letters : perhaps it is the fragrance of childhood and youth, and their innocent attempts at expressing ideas and emotions which are still fresh like the morning-dew on opening flowers, which remind us with painful insistence of the fact that these children are now grown up men and women, embittered against life and against one another, disappointed with their early attempts at integrating reality, and despising their own early childish stammerings.

From across oceans and continents these letters came to Rabindranath ; and despite all the difficulties of language and custom and cultural heritage, they were all as one in his all-embracing wisdom : and now that they are winning battles on the selfsame oceans and continents, having lost the clear eye of childhood and the unity that once was theirs, I thought it might provide us with a lesson, a lesson in human history and in human failure if some of these letters were published here just as Gurudeva received them.

I

Manhattan Beach,
California, (1915).

Dear Mr. Tagore,

Won't you please if you have a little bit of extra time answer my note ? Please, please do and I'll watch the maile hard.

Do you think God wants us to eat animals ? I have asked him but there is a Melba tree, with red blossoms and a hammock under it. I just love to lie there and watch the ocean. I wish you could see it. I know you would love it.

And O, if you would only tell me where I could get the music to the songs ? In Los Angeles, I can't get them. I bought a book of Mr. Rogers but now I hum my music to them, that is the only way.

Did you make music for "I must love—even if it brings sorrow" ? That is almost my very favourite.

I want to be a writer of songs someday. The ocean sings such pretty ones to me sometimes.

Just Manhattan Beach, California, will reach me.

Goodbye
Your friend
Rachel F.

II

27, Takecho, Shitaya,
Tokyo, Japan,
2nd July 1915

Dear Poet.—

I expect you are very surprised to hear from a strange Japanese boy whom you do not know.

Let me introduce myself. I am Keizo Matsusaka. I thought you would be glad to hear that your beautiful Poems makes me very happy. Other day I read your Gitanjali and Chitra in English and enjoyed greatly. I have just been reading your the Post Office it is indeed very good and I have enjoyed it immensely. And the Post Office seems to have impressed me most.

One reading was sufficient to stamp every detail of the story upon my memory forever.

I hear that you mean to visit our country in the season of Chrysanthemums. In Japan every person wait your great Poet with an out stretched neck, and then I want to see you.

Trusting that you will favour me and honour me with reply.

Please pardon the liberty

I remain,

Sir,

Yours truly and respectfully

K. Matsusaka.

III

Munich, the 7 June 21.

My dear Sir.

I am Erik Schaal, who has laid in his heart the words, which you have given him out Hamburg. The words rise my, if I doubt by my poet heart. I have complete yesterday a drama by one act. You are my favourite poet with Schiller and the Dane Andersen. I love you witch my whole heart. I implore you, me to write in the book, perhaps out "the gardener", which is my favourite book by you. I love you witch my whole heart and implore you, me a bill to write, if I you write and you me every month a letter, for you are me with yours books so near, as a brother.

You are the root of a futurity, very best race.

You disciple and adore

Erik Schaal

IV

Germany, Stettin,
d. 7.9.29.

Rabindranath Tagore !

I love India, and if the man know, Tagore, love the man, India *very*. -- I know you, many year, and you to go, with me, through my life. You to give very much me, and I give, my heart, and thank you.

I have a large beg, to write you me, a word, from you hand. You are the top, of the country's, to make you happy me, through a worde from you.

I shall artist, music (cello). If I travel soon, is India, the country, the I love. But what is India, without Tagore ? Replete you, my large beg !

With large thanks,

You

Monica Roestel.

N. Sch. I am German, and write not good English. To pardon you.

V

506 S. Lansdowne ave.
Lansdowne Pa.
April-12-1931

Rabindranath Tagore,

Dear friend,

Mother just learned the other day that you were going to have a birthday on the same day that I have mine. You are to be seventy years old and I am to be only nine. I hope you have a very happy birthday I am hoping to have nine little friends in for a good play. Mother will fix a birthday cake with nine candles and we will eat it with ice cream. If you should have seventy friends in for a visit what a big party it would be.

I would like to know how many miles you travelled from our house to yours. Could you tell ? When I am older I would like to travel to your house and visit your school. I hope you are feeling stronger now so you can walk about better. I love to play out of doors now for the grass is getting green and the flowers are beginning to blossom.

Happy birthday to you
Happy birthday to you
Happy birthday dear friend
Happy birthday to you

loveingly

Carolyn Hope Pickett.

(Continued from page 2)

branch at Shriniketan, does it. That was what attracted Deenabandhu Andrews to it, and he identified himself with it, and he became its champion collector.

"You can never give too much to Shantiniketan," said Gandhiji summing up his impassioned appeal.

"But," some one said, 'we are in the midst of turmoil. These are not times for money collection. Can't we wait until we have won our freedom?'

"Rabindranath could not wait to come to the world until freedom was won," said Gandhiji in a neat retort.

...

We extend our cordial welcome to Santi Das Gupta who has assumed charge as the Paridarsika of the Sree Bhavana as from the beginning of the session. Srimati Das Gupta is an honours graduate of the University of Calcutta. She also holds the Higher Diploma in Education of the Trinity College, Dublin University. Her experience as an educationist makes her well-suited for the responsible work with which she has been entrusted.

...

We are glad to report that the two following students have passed the Upadhi course of the Visva-Bharati and are now eligible for the diploma : Rasiklal B. Shah and Lalchand A. Gaglani. The following have duly passed the Madhya examination : A. Sree Rajyam, Khimji Karani, and Shi Shi.

...

Mohanlal Bajpai, who was till now the Manager of our quarterly journal in Hindi, has joined the Patha-Bhavana as an Adhya-

paka. He secured the M. A. degree in Hindi of the University of Nagpur this year, and was placed in the first class.

...

The Samsad has decided to put all the four journals published by the Visva-Bharati under common management and the Granthan-Bibhaga has been entrusted with the work. There will be a central office for the Journals and Kalidas Chatterji has been appointed to act as the common manager.

Kanai Samanta has been appointed an Assistant in the Publishing Department and Anil Chatterji, till now the Assistant Accountant in the General Office, has been transferred to the same department.

...

We are happy to learn that the authorities of Sriniketan have decided to effect improvements to the local library and museum. A separate room has been fitted up for the museum section which will be devoted to a comprehensive collection of typical specimens of local handicrafts and toys, and other objects relating to rural life.

Supriya Mukherji, an ex-student, has been appointed to hold charge of the library and the museum.

...

Admissions have been more than satisfactory this year. We extremely regret that owing to the want of adequate accommodation we had to refuse admission to a large number of candidates. We have tried as far as possible to admit students coming from such areas as are considered danger zones by the Government.

...

Sriniketan duly observed the annual *Meghadut* festival on June 16, the first day of Ashar, with songs, recitations and dances welcoming the advent of the Rains.

A playlet by Supriya Mukherji entitled *Swargabasir Narakjatra* was performed by some of our school children during the holidays. The play was of topical interest and dealt with the question of mass-evacuation of city-population to rural areas in face of war emergency. The youthful participants put their heart into the play and helped to make it a success.

...

It may be remembered that some time ago we received a donation of Rs. 10,000/- from the people of the Birbhum district. The Visva-Bharati has accepted the suggestion put forward by the donors in regard to the awarding of a few scholarships to deserving students of the Birbhum district desiring to pursue their studies in any educational department under the Visva-Bharati.

The Visva-Bharati will award three scholarships of the value of Rs. 8/- and three scholarships of the value of Rs. 4/- per month every year subject to the usual conditions of satisfactory progress and conduct of the students. The recipients of all these scholarships will be selected by the authorities of the Institution. In the selection merit shall be the deciding factor, but when other things are equal the pecuniary circumstances of the applicant will be taken into consideration. The holder of a scholarship must be a resident student in one of the hostels

attached to the department where he is admitted. In very special cases the authorities of the Institution may permit such a scholar to reside in a private residence.

...

Minor damages were affected, both at Santiniketan and Sriniketan, by a line-squall which visited this locality on June 7 last. The squall was of a cyclonic character and its velocity was more than 50 miles per hour.

...

We are glad to announce that the third issue of the Visva-Bharati Patrika (Hindi) will shortly be out. Translation from Gurudeva's Bengali writings include the drama *Red Oleanders*, *My First Visit to England*; poems and songs. There is a revealing article by Kshitimohan Sen on *Rabindranath and his idea about Death*. Baladeva Upadhyaya contributes monograph on the Pashupata Tantra—a comparatively lessor known Tantric cult. Sampurananda discusses the *Ends and Ideals of Education*, while Rabula Sankrityayana completes his interesting account of the *Theory of Relativity*. Dharendra Varma examines the prevalent *Classification of the Hindi Dialects and Speeches* and urges a reorientation of the same in the light of new discoveries. Benodebehari Mukherjee gives an account of the *Contemporary Indian Painting and Abanindranath Tagore*. There are extensive book-reviews and editorial notes; and a coloured plate by Nandalal Bose enhances the attraction of this particular issue.



বিশ্বভারতী পত্রিকা

বিশ্বভারতী-পরিচালিত মাসিকপত্র

সংস্কৃতি ও শিল্পকলার ক্ষেত্রে যে-সকল মনীষী নিজের শক্তি ও সাধনা দ্বারা অনুসন্ধান, আবিষ্কার ও সৃষ্টির কার্যে নিবিষ্ট আছেন শান্তিনিকেতনে তাঁদের আসন রচনা করাই বিশ্বভারতীর প্রতিষ্ঠাতা-আচার্য রবীন্দ্রনাথের ঐকান্তিক লক্ষ্য ছিল। এই লক্ষ্যসাধনের অগ্রতম উপায়রূপে বিশ্বভারতী একটি বাংলা মাসিকপত্র প্রকাশ করতে উद्यোগী হয়েছেন। শান্তিনিকেতনে বিচার নানা ক্ষেত্রে যারা গবেষণা করছেন এবং শিল্পসৃষ্টিকার্যে যারা নিযুক্ত আছেন, শান্তিনিকেতনের বাহিরেও বিভিন্ন স্থানে যে-সকল জ্ঞানব্রতী সেই একই লক্ষ্যে আত্মনিয়োগ করেছেন, তাঁদের সকলেরই শ্রেষ্ঠ রচনা এই পত্রে একত্র সমাহৃত করবার প্রয়াস হবে।

রবীন্দ্রনাথের যে-সকল কবিতা, প্রবন্ধ, চিঠিপত্র ও অগ্রাঙ্ক রচনা এখনো কোনো গ্রন্থে বা সাময়িকপত্রে মুদ্রিত হয়নি, এই পত্রিকায় ধারাবাহিকভাবে সেগুলি প্রকাশিত হবে।

রবীন্দ্রনাথ সম্বন্ধে গভীর ও বিস্তৃতভাবে আলোচনার প্রয়োজনীয়তা দেশে এখন বিশেষভাবেই অনুভূত হচ্ছে, এবং সর্বত্র এই আলোচনার সূত্রপাতও হয়েছে। আলোচনার সেই ব্যাপক প্রচেষ্টার সঙ্গে যোগসূত্র স্থাপন করা এই পত্রিকার অগ্রতম উদ্দেশ্য।

সংস্কৃতির বিভিন্ন বিভাগের প্রাচীন রূপ ও আধুনিক বিকাশ সম্বন্ধে আমাদের দেশের নানা বিজ্ঞাপ্রতিষ্ঠানে গবেষকগণ যে আলোচনা করছেন, তার শ্রেষ্ঠ নিদর্শন এই পত্রিকায় সংগ্রহ করবার বিশেষ উদ্যোগ এই পত্রিকার পরিচালকদের থাকবে।

বাংলাদেশে শিল্পকল্পনার ক্ষেত্রে যে-পরীক্ষার প্রাণবান প্রয়াস সজাগ ও সক্রিয়, এই পত্রিকার দ্বারা তার আত্মপ্রকাশের সুযোগ হবে, পত্রিকার কর্তৃপক্ষ এই আশা মনে পোষণ করেন।

শ্রীপ্রমথ চৌধুরী—সম্পাদক, শ্রীকান্তিচন্দ্র ঘোষ—সহকারী সম্পাদক, শ্রীক্ষিতিমোহন সেন, শ্রীনন্দলাল বসু, শ্রীরথীন্দ্রনাথ ঠাকুর, শ্রীচারুচন্দ্র ভট্টাচার্য ও শ্রীপুলিনবিহারী সেন

এই পত্রিকার পরিচালনা করবেন।

পত্রিকাটি রয়াল আকারে অনূন ৮ ফর্ম বা ৬৪ পৃষ্ঠা পরিমিত হবে; মূল্য প্রতি সংখ্যা আট আনা, সডাক বাবিক মূল্য সাড়ে পাঁচ টাকা; বিশ্বভারতীর সদস্যগণের জন্য সাড়ে চার টাকা।

আগামী ২২শে শ্রাবণ, ৭ই অগস্ট, রবীন্দ্রনাথের পরলোকযাত্রার প্রথম বাবিক দিবসে প্রথম সংখ্যা প্রকাশিত হবে।

চিঠিপত্র, টাকাকড়ি ও বিজ্ঞাপনাদি পাঠাবার ঠিকানা: কর্মাধ্যক্ষ, বিশ্বভারতী পত্রিকা, পোঃ-শান্তিনিকেতন, বীরভূম।

Editor : Rathindranath Tagore.

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VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Gleanings from Gurudeva

Man is constantly being born afresh as a child because truth is ever new. Existence is the play of the fountain of immortality. Wash your soul with its water, you who are old, and feel that you are of the same age with the flower that has blossomed this morning and with this light which carries fresh in its countenance the first smile of creation. This is freedom, freedom from the mist which for the time being masks our spirit with the semblance of blurred age, hiding from us the truth that we are the children of the immortal. Could the child bring such a joy to the heart of man if age and death were true ? Does not that joy come from a direct recognition of the truth of deathless life, of endless growth and ever-renewed hope of perfection ?

...

The moralist teaches us to know the world as unreal through the contemplation of death. But to make renunciation easy by calling the world names is neither true nor brave. For that renunciation is no renunciation at all in which things have lost their value.

On the contrary, the world is so true, that death's wheel leaves no mark upon it. The untruth is in the belief that this self of ours for its own permanent use can rob this world of even a particle of its things. Death has its concern only with our self and not with this world. The world never loses an atom, it is our self which suffers.

...

What is it in man that asserts its immortality in spite of the obvious fact of death ? It is not his physical body or his mental organisation. It is that deeper unity, that ultimate mystery in him, which, from the centre of his world, radiates towards its circumference ; which is in his mind, yet grows beyond his mind ; which, through the things belonging to him, expresses something that is not in them ; which, while occupying his present, overflows its banks of the past and the future. It is the personality of a man, conscious of its inexhaustible abundance ; it has the paradox in it that it is more than itself ; it is more than as it is seen, as it is known, as it is used. [From : Thought Relics]

...

Our existence has two aspects : Life and Death. Whenever we regard Death as

being separate and distinct from Life the nightmare of untruth begins to strike fear into our hearts. Our existence finds full play only when we come to realise the innate and universal harmony of Life and Death. If all were rhythm and there were no pause the rhythm would be incomplete. It is especially the death of our loved ones which makes it easier for us to feel that pause is an essential part of the rhythm. It is so because we do not find it easy to accept that our well-beloveds are no more. Therefore the day of the *Sradh* is also a day to testify our faith in the Life-force even in its very cessation.

May our dear ones, bound to us by so many ties of love and affection, rouse in our hearts, that supreme faith. When we look into the Hall of Life through the portals opened wide by their departed spirits may we not be deceived by the apparent emptiness ; may we on the other hand, face the fulness thereof. May we never succumb to that faulty vision which makes us look at life as apart from Death and may God lead us from Death to Eternal life ! [K. R.]

...

On the face of it, it may seem that with Death everything stands still, that Death brings a cessation of all activities. Nobody knows how and when it was given to our ancient Seer to realise that Death is inherently a dynamic impulse. If it were not so, 'whatever moves in this moving world' would have come to dead stop long ago. It is the great Seer who saw that along with heat and light, air and water and such other dynamic forces which reveal creation, Death, too, is busy doing similar work. Nay, the Poet went so far as to characterize it as 'swift-moving and fleet'. Whereas the other forces have their own particular functions, it is Death alone whose purpose it is to carry the universe along. Death is not a force of destruction, it is rather the swiftest current in the stream of creation. When the movement of the world becomes clogged owing to the slow progress of lazy Time, then it is Death which removes the obstacle of decrepitude and clears the path for unhindered progress. Death moves fast and fleet breaking through the barrier of a static existence. If Death were ever a really hostile force, through that one loophole the flow of the creative stream would have long made its escape into the depth of a cavernous darkness. If Death did not ceaselessly strike at the old and worn-out so that the spirit the new could find it possible to reveal itself in ever-changing forms, then infirmity would have made its appearance at the beginning and at the end of creation with its face furrowed by the lines of age. Everything would have been stereotyped in an utter sameness and all progress would have stopped automatically. It is the unwearied progress of Death which removes the lassitude of Time. Death throws the accumulated rubbish of the ages into one common heap of ruins and then with the very same ingredients builds up the edifice of the new. It surpasses the end so that we may begin from the beginning. That is why on the day of the *Sradh*, face to face with Death, we utter these significant words : 'Honeyed is the infinity of space and honeyed and sweet is the dust of the earth'. They are honeyed in the sense that they contain the very essence of joy and in that joy, the spirit of the ultimate truth is fully revealed. [K. R.]

An Address

[We observed the first death-anniversary of Gurudeva on Sravana 22 (August 7). There was a Mandir service in the morning. The following is a brief report of the address given on the occasion by Pandit Kshitimohan Sen].

Our *Sastras* say that there is no death for great souls. Our traditional practice is to celebrate the birth of the prophets and seers and not their death. They are the torch-bearers who show the way to their own generations and to the generations following. If the light is suffered to be extinguished, how shall we be able to find out our path ? That is why we look upon the cessation of their mortal existence as a prelude to a higher life of the spirit. Death, for such great souls, serves only to open wide the doors to a greater fulfilment. They resurrect themselves in the hearts of their followers and their example and teaching live after them to be followed and emulated.

Last year about this time the tired and worn-out body of our Gurudeva was laid to rest. Now that a whole year has gone by we should ask ourselves if he has been born anew in our hearts. Do we consider that since his physical entity is not with us, we have thereby lost him ; or, do we hold, even as he himself did, that he continues amongst us in spirit in a truer and a more tangible way ?

It will fortify our faith to know that Gurudeva himself never believed in the finality of death. While at the very threshold of life he declared in unmistakable accents that,

You need not lose heart,
not even the smallest thing does die. . . .

At the age of thirty-eight he wrote :

The End said, 'One day all will come to an end,
In vain is your boasting, oh Beginning.'
The Beginning said, 'Ah brother, where it ends
there does the beginning begin again.'

In an epigram, written about the same time, he says :

Softly does Night kiss the lips of the fading day
and whispers, "I am Death, your mother,
do not be afraid of me, I bring the gift
of new life to the worn-out day,
and keep you ever new from day to day.

During the *Gitanjali* period he has written :

Far as I gaze at the depth of thy immensity
I find no trace there of sorrow or death or separation.

At eighty, face to face with death, he says :

Like *Rahu* Death casts a shadow only
and is not able to drink up the divine nectar. . . .

In a poem written about the same time he has very clearly said that all the separate streams seem to be flowing ceaselessly towards some undefinable and limitless sea. They do not know where they will empty themselves ; they are only aware of an urge which impels them forward. It is as if the Boundless is the last resort:

At the horizon of life the mysterious path of death
reveals the newer mysteries of creation.
That I call the birthday of a new life
which is awakened to light
by the dusky evening chanting the mantram of night.

May he be born anew ! In the words of the Vedic Rishis let us say, 'May you be born again and may your death be but a prelude to a renewed existence !' There is no death for him, because,

In the midst of that immensity
old form vanishes giving place to newer forms.

If we are not able to feel his living presence in all our activities then it is in vain that we have had the privilege of being associated with Gurudeva and his asrama. It will be futile for us to try to fulfil the mission which he set before us if we are lacking in our faith in the continuance of his spiritual existence. He has himself enjoined :

Do not grieve for me,
my cup of life is not broken to pieces,
It still waits for its fulfilment
and it shall be my ceaseless endeavour
to fill its vacancy.

He lives on in his *sadhana* and indeed he desired that he should continue to live in and through his works.

Our ancient seers used to characterise the body as the physical entity, the *bhuta-kaya*, and the personality as revealed through the wider sphere of *sadhana* as the spiritual entity, the *dharma-kaya*. The *dharma-kaya* of a *Guru*, a real teacher, embraced the spiritual efforts of his disciples as well. Today, while the physical being of Gurudeva is no more, the ceaseless striving after perfection which his spirit represented, his suspended *sadhana* on earth, still hovers over us, seeking its *dharma-kaya*, its spiritual embodiment in our strivings. If we are not able to provide that shelter we shall have spent our life in vain.

He continues not only in his *sadhana* but also in the joy of our day-to-day life which he has so greatly enriched. That is why he has told us :

When my footsteps will no longer leave any trace
on the dust of this road,
who will dare say that I am no more ?
I shall take part in all your games,

you will call me by a new name,
 lock me in newer arms
 and time and again will I come and go
 —my very old self of all times.

In all our work and play and in all our serious efforts we must try to feel his living presence. That is why I am not sure if today we are celebrating his *Sradh* or the day of his birth. In his own words let us say:

and we shall sing the same chant to both,
 —to death and to life.

Let us commemorate not the day of his death but the day when he is born anew in our hearts. May we be fit vessels for receiving the best gifts of his *sadhana*. Let us shun all that is impure and ugly, all that is narrow and mean, for our Gurudeva was pure of heart, large of soul and a votary of the Beautiful.

Pandit Kshitimohan concluded his address with the following prayer:

Give us that initiation which enables us to identify ourselves with all times, all climes and all *sadhanas*. May what *was* find full play in our efforts and may what *is* lead to future fulfilment ! Give us that inner sight which enlarges our vision to the last limits of the universe and let our meditations reach the very centre of creation.

Obituary

It is with the deepest regret that we have to announce the passing away on July 23, of Srijukta Jugalmohini Devi, wife of the late Srischandra Majumdar.

She was the oldest inmate of our *asrama* and with her death our physical link with one of those who had watched the growth of the *Brahmacharyasrama* from its very inception has come to be snapped. Her distinguished husband was a highly esteemed literary companion of Gurudeva. Her eldest son, the late Santosh Chandra Majumdar will long be remembered for his many services to the institution. Two of her sons —Saroj and Sarvesh, better known to our ex-students as Bhola and Sabi, were cut off at the prime of life. Her talented daughter Roma Kar, who passed away seven years ago, did much to help building up the present high standard in the Sangit-Bhavana.

Srijukta Jugalmohini Devi bore her many bereavements with a stoic fortitude ; and, in her loving-kindness she was like a mother to us all. Her life was one long sacrifice and a succession of sorrows, and death came to her, in ripe old age, as a merciful escape. May her soul rest in peace.

Rabindra Museum

G. M.

Everything associated with the memory of Gurudeva is sacred. Its value cannot be measured in monetary terms. It can be appraised adequately only in the currency of consecrated living. And Gurudeva's long life was a song of devotion to the all-highest in Man.

Looked at in this light, the newly-started Rabindra Museum in the southern wing of Udayana, at Santiniketan, where all the precious literary and artistic expressions of the richly-varied genius of Gurudeva, on the one hand, and the embodiments of the people's love for their Poet-seer on the other,—all the gracious gifts of Rathindranath Tagore to the Visva-Bharati,—will be housed, is more of a Temple of Light than a storehouse of specimens, stuffed or seared, of skill.

Surveying the contents which are at present being arranged in the Museum, one might as well exclaim : “Eureka”, “Eureka” (I have found, I have found). There, in the beautiful hand of Gurudeva, is the manuscript of a book of poems which he wrote when he was still young, here is the first original translation in English of one of his short stories ; there is the initial draft of press statement protesting against separatism in the body of humanity or sectarianism in the sphere of self-realization ; here is a report of what transpired between Gurudeva and one of the representative men of the West, like Romain Rolland, when they met years ago in Geneva ; again, there is the germinal play with lines which later on sprouted forth in his paintings.

And what a bewildering variety of letters which were exchanged between Gurudeva and thousands of his correspondents ! One is spiced with humour, the other gives an insight into the green-room of his creative genius while writing a particular play ; the third is from a child talking of his pets and of his parents ; the fourth is addressed to some mighty ones of the Empire on which the sun is never supposed to set. And so on.

Then there are the various editions of his published works in Bengali and in their translation into the principal languages of India and the world. Here is the Tamil version, there is the Spanish one ; here is the Arabic translation ; there the Chinese. And what a beauty of decorative design even in their externals !

And his paintings ? They are representations of faces and places not seen with the outer eyes ; they are rather reminiscences, in colour, of scenes in which Gurudeva lived at the altitudes of his spiritual efforts. But what a feast for the soul to have her full fill at !

And from his high vantage-ground the Maharshi, wrapped up in meditation with those God-revealing windows,—his eyes, looks at the Temple of Light and seems to say, in accents of silence, “Well done, my beloved son, Rabi. In you the Creator was amply glorified. And you have His blessings and mine.”

Suddenly a vision flits across on the screen of the future. The Temple is astir with adoration. A number of priests of the ideal of the True, the Beautiful and the Good, are sitting on the floor with their heads bowed in reverence, scrutinizing the creations of Gurudeva's radiant genius and trying to understand their worth in the spirit of an humble seeker of truth, and praying with every breath, "Light, more light."

Years hence to this shrine of Art and Literature pilgrims will come, bringing with them their own small earthen lamps, so that they might light them at the "light that shines even in our darkness",—the light a burning flame of which was brought by our Promethean poet-preceptor to our earth, and which now illumines the Temple at Santiniketan.

The Master's Call

Gurdial Mallik

They came in the evening and said to me, "The Master calls you."

I stood up and started to follow in their footsteps. And as I passed along the royal road, the crowd looked at me and whispered that I had, at last, found the luck of my life. Soon I reached the Master's mansion and immediately was ushered into His audience-chamber.

"Here are the beggar's bowl and the ochre-coloured robe and the rosary". "Said he. Take these as your wealth for all ages to come."

I bowed and received the gift with folded hands.

And when I was returning home the expectant crowd smiled scornfully and said, "Is this the treasure on which you had set your heart" ?

But I remained silent with the joy of my precious possession.

The night came and in the presence of the stars, I kissed the beggar's bowl and the ochre-coloured robe and the rosary.

Santiniketan and Sriniketan

Prominent among those who visited the asrama during the last month were the two ministers of the Government of Bengal, the Hon'ble Mr. P. N. Banerji, in charge of the Revenue Department and the Hon'ble Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu, in charge of the departments of Local Self-Government, Public Health and Civil Defence.

The Hon'ble Mr. Banerji was accompanied by his wife. Both of them have a gift of creating about them an atmosphere of pleasant informality and we shall long retain happy memories of their short visit here.

...

The Hon'ble Mr. S. K. Basu came in his official capacity and with the specific purpose of personally acquainting himself with the problem of water-supply in this area. As is well-known, with the expansion of the institution, influx of evacuees and consequent increase in the population, this problem has grown both in volume and in acuteness. On several previous occasions we had to send representations to the government, seeking state help to combat the problem. Nothing has been done so far : and in the meantime, the menace of a water-famine lurks about like a malign spirit haunting the *amlaki* groves, the *sal* avenues and the green glades all of which had had their share in inspiring some of the most rapturous songs of Gurudeva. The danger is so real that unless something were done about it, not only would it effectively prevent the growth of the institution on the lines of an international

university, it would also make it impossible to continue on the present scale.

Let nobody make the mistake of thinking that we have suddenly been awakened to the danger. An article by Rathindranath Tagore appearing in this very issue will go to show that unaided by any help from the state we have been carrying on a lone fight with the miserly elements for upwards of three long decades. It will be seen that we have spared neither labour nor money to bring about a solution of this all-important and vital problem. It is because our resources with regard to both are necessarily limited that extraneous help has become essential.

It is extremely gratifying to know that the Hon'ble Minister has taken a very sympathetic view of our problem. He realises the enormity of the danger and is at present thinking out ways and means of how best to meet the situation. He fully understands that temporary and make-shift arrangements will hardly answer the needs although as at present situated the Government will find it difficult to find the wherewithal—in money as well as materials. We are eagerly awaiting the outcome of his visit with the faith that he will not will willingly let this asrama—the truest and the most tangible of all memorials to Gurudeva—to suffer and languish for want of one of its most material needs.

...

In the evening of July 18 the Hon'ble Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu addressed a gathering of the students and staff of the

Visva-Bharati. He prefaced his talk by referring to the purpose of his visit and expressing the hope that he might succeed in his mission to bring about a satisfactory solution of the problem of water supply. He further said that it was the duty of the state to help scholars and students to carry on their intellectual pursuits unimpeded and unhampered by the want of, what he described as, the minimum of human needs.

He then went on to describe his own reminiscences of the first visit he made to the *Brahmacharyasrama* (as the school was then called) and the interview he had with Gurudeva, then resident at *Dehali*. Commenting on the phenomenal growth and development of the institution since the time of his first visit, Mr. Basu declared that this growth was not so much of mere physical dimensions as of the spirit and ideal of what Gurudeva called by the name of 'Visva-Bharati.' The ideal of the Visva-Bharati, he said, was to aspire after a true synthesis of world culture. This ideal was sure to survive the ruthless onslaught of forces of aggression. Mr. Basu concluded by saying that a time was bound to come when the Visva-Bharati would be called upon to play its noble part in the cultural regeneration of a battle-scarred humanity.

...

It appears that we are going to have a very busy football season this year. The season has begun with a league fixture, with eight different teams participating. Matches are being held almost every afternoon and great enthusiasm prevails. Notable among the entrants is a team of Santals from Pearson Palli, and they are proving to be a great attraction. Their supporters have

introduced a novel form of cheering up their team, namely, by the beating of drums. It appears so much more respectable than clapping or crying oneself hoarse that one should seriously consider if this form of applause might not be adapted more widely by our playground crowds.

...

Visitors from all over India and abroad come to Santiniketan as to a place of pilgrimage hallowed by the memory of Gurudeva. They see at Santiniketan and Sriniketan his lofty ideals embodied in a tangible form. A good number of such visitors would like to take back with them some sort of memento which will continue constantly to remind them of Gurudeva and his immortal genius. They will be glad to know that we have made arrangements to keep all the various works of Gurudeva at a separate bookstall at Santiniketan. There can be no better souvenirs than books from Gurudeva's pen.

...

The total rainfall during the month of July was 8.99". The rain was fairly well-distributed all through the month and the conditions seem to be favourable for the seasonal crops.

...

In spite of the Government control on the price of foodstuffs the cost of living has shown a considerable rise during the recent months. In view of this situation we have been obliged to effect an increase in fees charged from our students. The Santiniketan Samiti has decided that as from Sept. 1 the monthly residential fees for senior students will be Rs. 30 and for junior students Rs. 28 only. Even this measure will not be

able to fully meet the deficit which is anticipated on account of the messing charges.

...

We are glad to report that Probodh Chandra Sen has joined his duties in the Vidya-Bhavana as an Adhyapaka of Bengali literature—the first post to be created in the name and memory of Gurudeva. Sjt. Sen's long experience in the teaching line as well as his original researches into the little-explored regions of the prosody of Bengali poetry makes him well-suited for the post.

As at present arranged, he will be required to prepare every year at least two written papers on some aspect of Gurudeva's genius and read the same before eminent literary bodies in Calcutta or elsewhere. He will deliver at least one general lecture every month on Gurudeva's life and work at Santiniketan. He will besides carry on research on Gurudeva's literature as well as do some teaching work in the Siksha-Bhavana. He has already started giving general lectures on Gurudeva's *Manasi*.

...

We are glad to report that Sukhamoy Mitra, one of our ex-students, has been employed as a teacher of art in the Theosophical School at Madanapalle.

..

With the completion of the two new wings the activities of the Silpa-Bhavana have been increased considerably. The carpentry, weaving and handicrafts sections are all working full-time. Now that the pottery furnace has at last been installed we are producing a variety of goods on a manufacturing scale and our tea sets are proving to be very popular. Recently we had to close down the food-products section

on account of the dearth of requisite materials.

...

We performed the Briksha-ropana (tree-planting) ceremony on August 7. The site chosen for the purpose this year was the neighbourhood of the Chhatimtola.

...

We have much pleasure in informing our readers, that the *Visva-Bharati Patrika* in Bengali made its appearance, as previously announced, on August 7—the day sacred to the memory of Gurudeva. Outwardly the journal looks attractive in its cream cover, and the contents inside promise to be equally so. It contains two pictures by Gurudeva, one being a figure-study in pencil and another a wash drawing in colour ; a photograph of Gurudeva in a characteristic pose appears as the frontispiece. The contents are varied and interesting. An introductory article by the Editor, Pramatha Chaudhuri, is followed by one from the pen of Pandit Kshitimohan Sen entitled ব্রতের দীক্ষা or *Initiation*. Among the unpublished writings of Gurudeva a few latter-day poems of his find a prominent place, and there is also the skeleton of a story which, alas, could not be amplified as he wanted to do. A short letter from Bankim Chandra Chatterjee to Dwijendranath Tagore is reproduced in facsimile and is followed by hitherto unpublished letters addressed to Gurudeva by Hem Chandra Banerjee and Gurudas Banerjee. There are also letters from Gurudeva to two of his intimate friends Srish Chandra Mazumdar and Mohit Chandra Sen. Acharya Abanindranath Tagor's *Mushima* conceals in its subtle humour a pathos which is touching. He also

(continued on page 25)

Our Problem

Rathindranath Tagore

My grand-father,* the Maharsi, had selected the barren undulating uplands near the town of Bolpur in the district of Birbhum to build his asrama. Here he sought to provide men like himself with a quiet retreat where they could meditate without any distraction from the world outside. Nobody could dream at the time of its inception that this retreat would become the centre of a busy life within half a century. Nevertheless the Maharsi's prophetic mind did see such a possibility. When my father wanted to start the *Brakmacharyasrama* at Santiniketan he had to approach the Maharsi for his approval and sanction. After the interview father told us how pleased the Maharsi was to hear of the proposal and how he ended his blessings with the prophetic words—"Your efforts will make Santiniketan teem with life."

Now that the teeming hundreds are here, for good or bad, we are faced with many problems concerning the day to day life of the community. And of these the problem of water-supply has assumed alarming proportions. The arid nature of the country, although it has its advantages for those who wish to live in seclusion, is ill suited for a large community like ours. The danger of a growing University town depending on the scanty supply of water available, became apparent long ago. When we were in America in 1913 we induced Mr. Akhil Chakravarty, an Indian student of engineering, specially to study tube-well sinking before returning from that country. On his arrival, some years later, he was good enough to make his first experiment at Santiniketan.

Tubewells were almost unheard of in Bengal at that time. Mr. Chakravarti brought his gear and stipulated that since he was giving his services free he, expected that the inmates of the asrama would contribute, as their share, free labour. The asrama did not disappoint him. We all worked* for a whole fortnight—but to no purpose. The tube did not yield any water. This did not dishearten us, determined as we were to find water for our asrama. In 1924 when father went again to the U. S. A. he purchased a complete equipment for boring, and, moreover, on his way back secured a donation of Rs. 10,000/- from Mr. Kadoorji, his host at Shanghai, towards the cost of waterworks at Santiniketan. The machinery when it reached us was found to be of an obsolete pattern and unsuitable for the soil conditions here. So instead of wasting any money in trying experiments ourselves, an order was placed with Messrs. Scott & Saxby on the basis of 'no water no payment'. The firm claimed that the bore they made went to a depth of over 400 ft. but since the yield did not satisfy the minimum specified in the contract a suit was filed and the Visva-Bharati got back the money advanced.

* It was to hearten us in this labour that father composed his famous song এদৌ এদৌ হে তৃষার জল... (For an English translation please see *Poems* by Rabindranath Tagore, No. 64).

The prospect of having an adequate supply of water from tubewells not being very hopeful my father appealed to Lord Lytton when he visited the Asrama in 1927 to sanction a canal irrigation scheme from the Ajay. A survey was carried out, but by the time it was completed and received the approval of the Chief Engineer, the Government had no funds to undertake it. In the meantime the Irrigation Department also made a survey of the locality at the cost of the Visva-Bharati in order to find out alternative schemes of water supply. Two such schemes were suggested namely (1) making artificial lakes by constructing bunds in the Khoai lands, (2) by pumping water from the Kopai river situated at about two miles distance from Santiniketan. Both these schemes involved expenditure beyond the capacity of the Visva-Bharati and so they were abandoned.

An amusing experience occurred before finally we got our tube-well. An American firm called the Texas Tubewell Company was persuaded to try their skill. After running down the amateurish efforts of other firms and raising our hopes to the sky by large promises in the truly American tradition they failed to draw any water from several experimental bores which they tried and then in shame fled from the place abandoning all their machinery. It was left to Mr. Amulya Krishna Biswas at the time an engineer by hobby, but now the Chief Engineer of the Assam Bengal Cement Co., to make the tubewell yield a decent quantity of crystal clear potable water. It hardly cost him anything to do it—since all he did was to jack up one or two of the tubes sunk by the Texas Tubewell Co. to an upper stratum which he surmised contained water. It has subsequently been verified that water-bearing stratum within easy reach under the soil at Santiniketan is to be found only between 90 to 120 feet below ground level, the depth which Amulya Babu had selected. The asrama celebrated the occasion by inviting the then Minister, Sir Bijoy Prasad Sinha Roy to open the waterworks on the 11th February, 1933.

For sometime we considered ourselves safe in having enough water—but soon discovered that 2,000 gallons per hour was entirely inadequate for the need of the institution at the rate it was expanding. We began to explore every possibility and it soon became evident that it was a case where the state alone could help. Visva-Bharati had by this time spent more than half a lakh in trying to find a source of water and it could ill-afford to spend more. Moreover the war-conditions had forced the authorities to give shelter to many evacuees from the danger zones and lease out for building purposes more than 400 bighas of land on the east of the asrama—thus increasing the population to an expectation of over 3,000. Waterworks to supply such a large community is a costly affair—much beyond the resources of the institution.

It is therefore very gratifying to the Visva-Bharati authorities and to the inhabitants of Santiniketan that there is now every prospect of getting in the near future as much water as is required. On our representation, the Hon'ble Mr. S. K. Basu, the Minister of Local Self Government and Public Health, has taken a very sympathetic view of the problem. He himself came recently to visit the place accompanied by members of his departments who are competent to give him the necessary technical advice and help him

to draw up a scheme immediately. It has been suggested that the Bhubandanga bund may be acquired by the Government and converted into a reserve tank from which water would be supplied to Santiniketan and its surroundings after proper filtration. The deepest gratitude and thanks of all the well-wishers of the institution will go to the Hon'ble Mr. Basu and to his colleagues if the scheme is carried out and Santiniketan is spared the fate of another Fathepur-Sikri.

(continued from page 22)

speaks on Art in general, and Gurudeva's art in particular, in his আর্টপ্রসঙ্গ — *On Art*, an article in his characteristic style. The Editor's description of Calcutta as he saw it after his return from Santiniketan in June last sparkles with humour. From Rathindranath Tagore's diary of 40 years ago are reproduced two pieces of conversation by Gurudeva—one on Religion and another on Woman's Rights. This is followed by Nabendu Bose's interesting article on the technique of Birbal's style. The review concludes with a short literary causerie on various topics.

...

We are grateful to Naren Nandi, one of our ex-students, who has supplied us with some information a propos Rathindranath Tagore's article entitled *Our Santal Villages*, which appeared in the July issue of the *News*. The following account is based on his note :

Classes in the Santal village were first organised by Bankimchandra Roy—at that time an Adhyapaka of the *Brahmacharya-asrama*—with the help of some of his students. The late Suhrid Sen Gupta showed great enthusiasm for the work and

his untimely death meant a great loss not only to the asrama but also to this important social activity. At that time classes were held in the different Santal hamlets and no school building was in existence.

At the instance of the late Kalimohan Ghosh and under his inspiration a band of asrama students began collecting subscription for the school building. From Rs. 100/- collected in this way and with the voluntary labour contributed by a number of Santals of the village as well as by a few of our students the mud cottage was erected to house the school. William Pearson's connection with the Santal School began at a time when the School was already an established institution. It must be mentioned, however, that no single person has ever been able to do so much to win the love and esteem of the Santals as Pearson had done.

..

The Publication Department of His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad's Government, has made to the Islamic Studies Section of the Vidya-Bhavana, a generous gift of valuable and rare Arabic works brought out by them. We convey to the Department our very grateful thanks and appreciation.

...

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The poems published in this volume are translated from the original Bengali compositions of Rabindranath Tagore. They were all translated by the Poet himself, with the exception of the last nine poems. They have not been published before in any book. References to the Bengali originals are given in the notes at the end. The poems have been arranged in four sections which roughly correspond to four major divisions in the Poet's writings. This volume includes many songs composed by him during the Swadeshi Movement : "India's Prayer" written on the occasion of the Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress, 1917, and recited by the Poet at its first sitting, and a translation by the Poet of the famous anthem JANA-GANA-MANA ADHINAYAKA, and ends with his last poems (November 3, 1940—July 30, 1941) **Rupees Two and Annas Eight only.**

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Sravana 22 : An Appeal

By Amiya Chakravarty

This is a day to light the sacred flame, to steel the will in high resolve, and to transcend death in our contemplation of a great life. It is a day of prayerful and silent homage to Rabindranath, when we would conquer fear and turn our sorrow into a wider consciousness.

Not celebration, but interior acceptance of truth can mark this day of Rabindranath's death, as we would observe it. We cannot make it an annual occasion for speeches and conferences. This custom, if it hardens, will not bring us near to him but banish us from the feeling of his reality.

Throughout his life, on many occasions, Rabindranath expressed his disassociation with memorial meetings. The birthdays of great and loved ones he would have us celebrate, even as we rejoice in the arrival of the New Year. Indeed, during the last years of his life, his birthday was often celebrated on the first of Vaisakh, investing the Bengali New Year's day with newer significance. Let ANAND MELAS, music and literary festivals grow round the anniversary of his great birth. That would be India's way of remembering a friend of the peoples. A poet who stood for life's glory for the wonder and power of free mankind, who helped us in ushering a new day in civilisation is best honoured in the plenitude of our creative efforts. Choice publications, special numbers of magazines, and festive display would fit in with the first or the twenty-fifth of Vaisakh.

But 22nd Sravana—the 7th of August—will burn into our hearts; in homes and hamlets all over India, the consecration of his life will become part of our great destiny. It will come in the form of inmost faith and courage. We dare not waste this day in memorial meetings and in the externalities of a restless age.

Santiniketan and Sriniketan

The Samsad of the Visva-Bharati placed on record its sense of deepest sorrow at the passing away of Mahadeva Desai.

A special memorial service was held on July 25 in the mandir. Pandit Kshitimohan Sen addressed the congregation and prayed for the peace of the departed soul. In course of his address Pandit Kshitimohan touched upon the many sterling qualities of Mahadeva Desai and said that he was one of the fortunate few who could choose the mission of his life and at the same time devote himself to fulfil the same in a conscientious and courageous manner. 'Nobody was better equipped than he for the task which he set before himself. A tree in order that it might rise to its full stature, must, first of all, be firmly implanted in its native soil. It should at the same time have that freedom of the skies as would enable its spreading branches to secure as much nourishment from the sun and wind and rain as they are capable to absorb. Mahadevabhai knew that his place was by the side of Mahatma Gandhi; he followed his leader and literally died at his post, and thus covered himself with honour and glory. His roots went deep into the native soil but that did not prevent him from spreading his branches far and wide. That he was a great admirer of Gurudeva and his institution, is known by many. What is not generally known however is that he was a voracious and appreciative student of Gurudeva's literature. He drew much inspiration from the songs of Gurudeva some of which he had translated

for the benefit of his Gujarati brethren. He was fascinated by the drama *Pryaschitta*, which, he said, enunciated for the first time the principles of non-violence which was destined to play such a significant part in the history of the political upheaval of India.'

All the departments remained closed on Aug. 16 as a mark of respect to his memory. At a meeting of the staff and students held on the same day a condolence resolution was passed expressing sympathy with the bereaved in their irreparable loss.

...

We observed the Rakhi-Purnima Day with songs and recitations on August 26. The ceremony took place in the verandah of the Udayana facing the full-moon. The historic song composed by Gurudeva and sung on the Rakhi-Bandhan day several decades ago during the stirring days of the Bengal partition movement, featured in the programme. The following is Gurudeva's own translation of the song :

Let the earth and the water, the air and
the fruits of my country be sweet,
my God.
Let the homes and marts, the forests
and fields of my country be full,
my God.
Let the promises and hopes, the deeds
and words of my country be true,
my God.
Let the lives and hearts of the sons and
daughters of my country be one,
my God.

Rabindranath in Western Music

By A. Aronson

We can distinguish two kinds of songs in Western music, the folk-song and the art-song. The former is part of the cultural heritage of the people, anonymous like the great gothic cathedrales because no mastermind but the creative genius of the people expressed itself through them; they are of a collective origin grown on the fruitful and undivided soil of the past. The latter are the expressions of men of genius, intensely personal, reflecting the moods of a moment or the eternally recurring emotions of individual creative effort. At times we find a great musician transferring into the world of sounds what a writer of genius had said in form of metre and rhyme. There is Beethoven, the greatest of them all, setting to music parts of Goethe's drama *Egmont* and using Schiller's *Song to Joy* as the closing movement of his last and greatest symphony; there is the romantic Schubert composing many of Goethe's poems and transforming them again into folk-songs which are sung still today by peasants and city-dwellers alike, on the fields as well as in concert-halls. There is, in more recent times, Debussy's attempt to set to music one of the most complex of modern French poems, Mallarmé's "L'après-midi d'un faune". Indeed, instances of this fertile interchange of language, words, and ideas, on the one hand, and melodies, sounds, and harmony, on the other, are not lacking in the West, and much could be written on the success or failure of such attempts.

It is necessary to know something of the break in the tradition of Western music (as of poetry, painting, and indeed all the arts), to understand why the present century has not produced another Beethoven or Schubert and why Rabindranath's poems were set to music by frequently mediocre composers with not altogether satisfying results. There is no doubt, however, that Rabindranath's poetry very strongly attracted European composers, both on the Continent and in England, so much so that one musical critic exclaims: "The Indian writer Rabindranath Tagore has perhaps more than any other contemporary poet had a universal influence on modern composers". (Glasgow Herald, 26.9.1923.)

The root of the evil is as usual the translation. People were led to believe from the very beginning that the English translation reproduced exactly the original "rhythm" of the Bengali poem; they, therefore, came to altogether wrong conclusions as regards the musical contents of Rabindranath's songs. Here is a significant quotation referring to the English translation of *Gitanjali*: "The bondage of cast-iron metres is taken away, and we can make for ourselves the lilt and beat which belong to nature as Mr. Tagore does with the music to which he has set the originals." (T. P.'s Weekly, 4.4.1913.) Composers were led to "imagine" all kinds of "rhythms" and "melodies" which would correspond to the original. At best they could reproduce the mood of the writer—but often they took

recourse to cheap and imitative orientalism of the drawing-room kind. It is difficult to fathom what precisely they imagined "Indian" music to be like. The following instance is given without any ill-will, as an example of how musical "imagination" can be clouded over by non-musical considerations of a narrow political kind. The Director of Music of the Governor of Bengal's State Orchestra wrote as follows in 1923 :

"What we call harmony, or notes in combination, the Indian calls noise, his mentality being absolutely unable to grasp two sounds or ideas at the same time. According to their highest authority, Sir Rabindranath Tagore, the human ear cannot absorb two or more melodies at the same time, neither should the melodies be spoiled by the addition of a bass, accompaniment or counter melody. Therefore all European music is noise that offends the ear. This from a Hindu who is recognized as so superior to his fellows that he has been given a British knighthood and has lectured to the brightest intellects of the U. S. A. and Canada . . . And their one track mentality that makes them agitate for Swaraj, or India for the Indians only and no trade with the rest of the world, also makes it impossible for them to grasp more than a single note at a time. . . One can get some idea of the difficulty the British have in understanding and governing a nation whose mentality will not allow of them (sic !) being able to follow more than single notes in succession, but will allow them to wear a European shirt and coat but no trousers, patent leather boots of the most uptodate kind, and a turban, and not possess a single handkerchief between quite 300.000.000 of its inhabitants. (Music Courier, New York, U. S. A., 10. 4. 1923, "The Music of India", by C. J. Courfield, L. R. A. M.)

This is musical criticism of the most distressing kind, but already in 1913 people came to the conclusion that "if Occidentals sing Bengali songs, it will be to occidental melodies" (Evening Post, Chicago, 21.11.1913). The setting to music of Rabindranath's poem in the West, therefore, suffered from the very outset from these preconceptions (not necessarily only political), and even the most genuine of modern composers could not quite free himself of them.

Some 40 to 50 composers tried their hands at Rabindranath's literary output : for not only his poems, but also his plays and even short stories were set to music. For convenience sake we have adopted the three following divisions: 1. Songs with piano accompaniment ; 2. Songs or chorus with orchestra or other instrumental accompaniment ; 3. Purely instrumental music.

The majority of the composers were satisfied with vocal music accompanied by piano. Let us examine one of them, Eric Fogg, the Manchester composer, who set to music in 1921 several poems from *The Gardener*, entitled "Songs of Love and Life", and in 1933 added three more "Songs from Tagore" to them. We also know that he set to music Keats' *Ode to a Nightingale* for one baritone voice, string quartet and harp. Here is a strikingly intelligent critical comment :

"The composer has rather handicapped himself at the outset by selecting Tagore's prose poems. True, he is not the first, nor will he probably be the last, musician to be drawn to them ; but in considering them with a view to musical setting, one is tempted to vary the 18th century French dictum and think that what may be well worth saying can not always be sung. Lines such as one about 'a big buffalo

with mudstained hide standing near the river with placid, patient eyes', may seem to some to yearn for musical expression, but if it does, it has not received it here. The presence of this and passages akin to it impose on the musician the necessity of moving in a usually haphazard way from point to point, and greatly mar the likelihood of—musically speaking—seeing the poem steadily and seeing it whole." (Musical News and Herald, London, 11.2.1922.)

Among other English composers we find Denis Ashleigh's setting of "Do not go, my Love" ("an effective interweaving of artistry and romance", says the Musical Opinion of September 1932), Landon Ronald's four *Gitanjali* poems in 1913, Felix White's "Where the Mind is without Fear", Frank Bridge's "Speak to me, my Love" and "Day after day" ("Bridge has entirely succumbed to the ultra-modern ; dissonant chordal structure and irrhythmic vocal lines largely mar the beauty of the words," says the Music Trades Review of October 1925), Miss Marguerite Espir's setting of songs from *The Gardener* and *Fruitgathering* ; Hageman's 'Do not go, my Love' and "I look into the garden" which have been recorded on Columbia ("with an opening that is not altogether free from conventionality, Hageman's "Do not go my Love' is still a good modern love song," says the Musical Opinion of February 1933), the South Africans Albert Mallison (who also set to music Sappho, Longfellow, and Poe) and Winifred Vyvyan ; the Canadian Earl Winter (who also set to music Shelley and Shakespeare) ; and the American Alden Carpenter ('one of the foremost composers in the United States,' says the Evening Post, Chicago, in November 1913).

On the Continent we have the Polish composer Szymanowski ("a true representative of the musical genius of his country, a genius with two faces, one turned towards Germany, the other towards Russia", says the Listener of August 1936), Julius Weismann's five songs from *The Gardener* whose exotic treatment of these songs was sharply criticised in the Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant of March 1932, Jean Cras' 6 songs from *Gitanjali*, in France, ("these songs do not need any accompaniment ; they speak for themselves," says the Figaro, Paris, of December 1924), and the Italian di Veroli in a setting for two tenor solos.

The difficulties confronting the composer when setting to music songs with instrumental accompaniment are even greater. Frequently the very simplicity of the poem is marred by the use of a full orchestra with its complex sound-nuances and a contrapuntual melody which in its very essence is frequently opposed to the ideas or emotions underlying Rabindranath's original poem. Let us again examine one instance closely, Eric Fogg's setting of a "mystical parable" by Rabindranath, called "The Hillside" :

"He has treated words of exquisite simplicity by Rabindranath Tagore with an opulence that requires soprano and baritone soloists, full chorus and full orchestra. Tagore's tender allegory, typically of the East, is submerged beneath a flood of orchestral tone, clever choral writing and luscious Western melody. The fact that much of the music has merit and rises at times to beauty only accentuates the musical and poetic errors the composer permits himself. At that stanza when a profound experience comes to the poet, a stanza which is the turning point of the poem, Fogg kept his Baritone singing : 'It was a summer night, the breeze blew

from the South', till the babble became bathos." (Christian Science Monitor, Boston, U.S.A., 28.2.1929.)

Here are some more experiments of the same nature : Ernst Levy (Germany), five songs from *Gitanjali* for one voice, one string quartet and harp, performed in Switzerland in 1915 ; Frankerburger (Germany), dialogue from *The Gardener* for 2 voices (soprano and Baritone) and full orchestra, performed in 1921 in Munich ; Arthur Shepherd (United States), 3 poems from *Gitanjali* for voice, strings, and piano, performed in Salt Lake City in 1933 ; M. Bozza one poem from *Gitanjali* for voice and orchestra, performed in Paris in 1934 ; and Hans Schouwman (Holland) "Four serious songs to words by Tagore", written in the form of the four movements of a symphony, for voice and string quartet, performed in London in 1934.

We now come to the purely instrumental pieces. These are probably the most interesting and successful of all, because freed from the chains of language and metrical conventions, the composer could express the "mood" of a poem better than in the narrow framework of an unsatisfactory and misleading translation. There is Miss Ethel Leginska conducting in London in 1924 "two of her own pieces, which were somewhat conventional modern orchestral rapsodies, suggested by poems of Rabindranath Tagore". The Russian composer Borchman who in 1923 in his symphonic poem *Kusum* attempted to interpret one of Rabindranath's stories in terms of purely instrumental music. John A. Foulds (England) who composed the incidental music to the play *Sacrifice* ; Friedrich-Karl Grimm who wrote a Ballad for violin and piano based on *The Gardener* (he also set to music Rembrandt's picture "*The Anatomy Lesson*", Kipling's "*Junglebook*", and Dante's "*Divine Comedy*", all of which were, strange to say, performed during one concert in London in 1930) ; the South African Lily Lapin whose "Songs of Loneliness" are set for piano only and are based on poems by Rabindranath ; and lastly Horace Johnson's orchestral suite "Imagery", inspired by poems by Rabindranath and based upon ancient Hindu themes, performed in London in 1936.

One fact stands out above all others : Rabindranath's poems appealed to composers of almost all nationalities ; sometimes the very same poems were simultaneously set to music by English, German, and French composers. Their "international" character prevented them from being genuine folk-music. They were indeed "art-songs" in the narrowest sense of the term, fit to be performed before an international public in the concert-halls of the capitals of Europe—divorced, however, from the life, the meaningful reality, of the "people". Although space does not permit a closer analysis of these musical compositions, it is safe to assert that—except in a very few cases—neither their conventionality nor their up-to-dateness could render, musically speaking, in any way Rabindranath's original thoughts or emotions. These are indeed songs "for art's sake", uncertain experiments with sounds which were no longer rooted in the soil, the convulsive stammering of composers whose creative attempts had been paralysed by the break in the tradition of European music and who were as yet unable to evolve a new rhythm, new harmonies and themes, a rejuvenated and dynamic musical sensibility,

A Letter

In a letter dated May 15, Ipswich, Suffolk, England, Noel G. Hustler, Secretary to the Elmsett Community writes to Rathindranath Tagore as follows :

Unfortunately it will probably be a long time before this reaches you. However, I feel a great need to write to you, and would be more than grateful if you could devote time to a reply to us in England.

I should perhaps explain that I am the Secretary of a small Christian Community of seven men and two women who are living together farming an average of 40 acres, and that our group is one of a number of similar experiments up and down the country. The communities are loosely co-ordinated by the Community Service Committee, and in brief the aims are the spiritual regeneration of society through the lives and works of men and women who have dedicated their lives to a God-conscious sacramental attitude. The life of Rabindranath Tagore himself is a glorious example to many of us who are trying to live daily by the highest ideals we can embrace.

Elmsett has been established for 3 years, and particularly more recently we have been wonderfully encouraged and inspired by the life and writings of Rabindranath Tagore, whose mystic consciousness of God has given us hope and joy in our worship together. It was therefore a sad loss to us to learn of his death last August, and in the little chapel which we have developed out of a disused Beach Hut a simple memorial service was held. Many of us, too, have been filled with that great urge to go out into the world almost as pilgrims, and had the war not prevented it, might have considered working our passage to Calcutta in a great effort to come to Santiniketan if you would have welcomed such a journeying to see you. Since that joy of personally meeting you all is denied, I felt that I must write and ask you to tell us how you are getting on, how the loss of Rabindranath has been overcome. We should much appreciate a real contact being established between you and ourselves. As a matter of fact, we have and are still making small hand-made, hand-written books containing in the main our own poems and prosody, and this collection we have called Santiniketan Press !

It seems difficult to obtain first-hand information of the Santiniketan Institutions, and a description of the various academies and customs and mode of education would be welcomed by us all.

Such a personal touch as a letter from you in reply would afford, would I consider, be of real value in fostering understanding where a common unity of faith exists between us.

I look forward with eagerness to a message of encouragement from you, our brothers and friends across the seas.

May God bless you in all your endeavours, and I pray that your home may be spared the savagery of modern warfare !

Preetnagar

By G. M.

“Preetnagar at last !”

So I said to myself when, after covering in a bus about eleven miles from Atari, a station on the Lahore-Amritsar line, I arrived at Preetnagar on the evening of the 20th June. I had heard of it two or three years before from a progressive educationist of our country. And ever since I had been hoping to spend a day or two in this new centre of community-building education and activity.

The centre, which owes its inspiration and inception to Sirdar Gurbakhsh Singh—a man with a vision of the world when none shall be for a party or a parish but every one shall belong to the great Brotherhood of Humanity, combined with a keen American sense of doing things efficiently,—is situated in a rural setting. It has the lay-out of a well-planned modern town, though the atmosphere is more of a retreat where tranquility and toil go hand in hand. It is founded, to quote from the prospectus, “in the belief that man’s unprecedented and ever increasing possibilities of control over his environment necessitate completely new methods of social organisation and variation of personal conduct.”

To achieve the above object the organisation known as the Sansar Preet Mandal runs a primarily co educational and cosmopolitan school called the Activity School, which prepares the students for the Matriculation standard of the Punjab University, but in accordance with its own unique technique. The staff does not “teach” them as such but conduces to the full development of the child’s personality “through arousing into action his latent faculties by placing him amidst an atmosphere of learning and the open expanse of nature”. Thus the emphasis is on the making or doing of things which leads to true knowledge. Amongst the inmates of Preetnagar there are poets, novelists, scholars and psychologists whose range of investigation and imagination touches the fringe of the infinite in Wisdom or Truth, as the Art and Music classes reveal the infinite in colour and in cadence, and the spaciousness all around, encircling the colony with arms of altruism, impinges on the infinite in idealism as well as in outlook. There are at present about 120 pupils on the rolls. Recently they have opened classes for the benefit of the adult and young villagers of the neighbourhood.

The other principal activity of Preetnagar is the Community Builders’ Association which has planned to organise “service centres in suitable rural areas” for creating goods and for selling and buying them so that the actual producers may be saved from the triple tyranny of the moneylender, the middleman and the magnate.

Besides, there are a press and a publishing house which not only publish books in Urdu and Gurumukhi written by the founder and some of the *litterateurs* on the staff but

also arrange for translation and publication of works in other languages. They also bring out two monthly magazines in the chief languages of the Punjab which occupy places of honour among the periodicals of the province.

Preetnagar is one big family, of which the founder is the *pater familias*, the workers the elder brothers and sisters and the pupils the children. They are striving to think and work in term of "We" instead of "I". The most outstanding feature of the centre is its freedom from dependence on donations. A number of people who have faith in the founder's vision have contributed each a sum of Rs. 100/- re-payable after a period of ten years. And it is his business acumen which has enabled him "to grow two blades of grass where one grew before".

It is a pity that parochialism and prejudice have tried to arrest the onward march of Preetnagar. But, perhaps, such obstacles are the 'condition precedent' to the working out of every non-sectarian and non-profit-earning programme. The inherent dynamism in their ideals will give strength to the band of community-builders to overcome all opposition. For, such has been the history of Santiniketan also.

(Continued from page 28)

The following messages are based on newspaper reports of the inauguration of the Tagore Society in Bombay which took place on August 7 last :

In his message to the society Mahatmaji conveyed his benediction and expressed the hope that 'your homage will not end with mere lip-service on this occasion, but you will all constitute yourselves as living memorials and ideals of Tagore.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad stated that it was India's pride and privilege that a great soul like Tagore was born in it. 'His message will guide us all in the difficult path that is ahead of us.'

'He was a great poet', read a message from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, 'a great patriot, but he was above all, a man of giant stature in a world of pigmies. That India should have produced him and another mighty personality—Gandhi—in the course of one generation fills me with wonder and

the glow of pride in my country. . . Tagore and Gandhi, each in his different way, a symbol of India, steeped in her ancient culture and drawing strength and sustenance from her. How typical they are of India, and yet how utterly different from each other !'

In her inaugural address Mrs Sarojini Naidu, President of the Tagore Society, emphasised the human touch which permeated the poetic works of Gurudeva and said : 'Throughout my life I have lived in the legend of Tagore. My earliest memories are stories of Tagore told me by my father. His songs, stories and pictures influenced me to a considerable extent. Tagore loved India and the quality of his love expressed itself in creative and dynamic forms. His patriotic songs were like trumpets of freedom and he touched through them the hearts of his own people—their inmost hopes and aspirations. He was a torch-bearer not merely of patriotism. Like Leonardo da

Vinci he wanted to bring about a new spirit in every sphere of our national life, a renaissance in the domain of knowledge and culture and human experience. To his patriotism every patriot has paid tribute ; to his wisdom every philosopher has bowed his head ; to his loving care the womanhood of India is beholden ; to his sacrificial devotion to the cause of freedom we are all greatly indebted and to his lyrical poems we pay our tribute. Tagore and Gandhiji worked in their own spheres of life but to one common end. Both represented to the world at large the mind of India and had the same message for humanity-the message of Love !'

...

As from 1349 B. S. it has been decided to hold the Loka-Siksha Examinatinn in the month of Sravana and not Falgun. The previous examination took place in April last and this year (1349 B. S.) it came off between Aug. 10 and Aug. 13. Thus we had very little time at our disposal to enrol the examinees. In spite of this difficulty and the unsettled condition in the country the number of examinees increased : 167 candidates were enrolled from 35 centres as against 150 candidates from 32 centres of the previous year. Our congratulations are due to the persons in charge of the different centres but for whose help and co-operation we would not have been able to achieve this result.

Owing to steep rise in the prices of food-stuff it has been decided to raise the amount of dearness allowance to those employees of the Visva-Bharati who draw Rs. 30/- or less per month, from Re. 1/- to Rs. 3/-.

...

Kuvernath Dwivedi, Sahtyasastri, has been employed as Manager of the Visva-Bharati Patrika in Hindi in the vacancy caused by the transfer of Mohanlal Bajpai to the Patha-Bhavana.

...

The Sachiva, Santiniketan has issued the following circular to the guardians of resident students :

I wish to draw your attention to the serious situation prevailing in the country and the imminent danger of all communication being interrupted. The repercussions of the mass upheaval in the cities are beginning to reach the villages and we cannot say with any assurance that they will not affect the normal working of our Institution. We cannot say how long we shall be able to keep this Institution open, though we shall try to do so as long as we can. In the meanwhile we should like to know what plans you have, if any, for your wards. If you wish to send for them and keep them with you till the conditions are once again more or less normal, we shall gladly let you do so. We would like that in this matter the responsibility of decision should properly rest with you. Arrangements for escorting the wards will have to be made by the guardians concerned.

...

Owing to the political disturbances in the country in general and in this locality in particular it was subsequently decided to close down the Siksha-Bhavana for the time being with effect from August 27. The classes will resume only after the Pujah holidays on November 14. Classes in the other departments are being held as usual.

...

Mr. S. Ghose, Chief Engineer and Rai Bahadur S. C. Mazumder, Deputy Secretary, Public Health and Local Self-government Department, Government of Bengal, paid a visit to Santiniketan recently in order to investigate the local conditions and formulate a practicable scheme of water-supply for our asrama.

The Sisu cup was annexed this year by the Fifth Group who defeated the Sixth A Group by two goals to one, in the deciding match. The Suhrid Cup was won by the First Group with the Eighth Group as the runners-up. The First Group was by far the better side and should have won by a better margin than the three goals they scored. Their rivals put up a plucky fight and went down fighting.

The first friendly football match of the season came off on August 27 between the Daulatpur College and the local eleven. Our team won by two goals to nil. Both the goals were scored during the second half after a bitter fight and even more bitter resistance. On the whole the Daulatpur team were the better side and we were lucky to win. We hope to be able to announce the results of the league fixture by the next month.

A school has been started at Darjeeling for the education of Chinese children evacuating from vulnerable areas in the province of Bengal. We have much pleasure in announcing that the Visva-Bharati has associated itself with this laudable move. The services of Fa Chou, a research scholar in the Cheena-Bhavana, have been lent for the

purpose of assisting in the work of the newly established school. The staff of the Cheena-Bhavana will very soon be strengthened by the inclusion of Mr. Hsiao-Ling Wu who was for some time a Lecturer in the Peking University. Mr. Wu is expected to arrive very soon.

It has been decided to observe Sravana 22 as a holiday in various departments of the Visva-Bharati. We have further arranged to commemorate the death anniversary of Gurudeva by holding the Vriksharopana ceremony, simultaneously or at short intervals, in the asrama as well as in the surrounding villages during the month. Mention has already been made in the last issue of the *News* of the ceremony which took place at Santiniketan on Aug. 7 when Mira Devi planted a Chhatim sapling near the Chhatimtola.

The Vriksharopana ceremony took place also at Paruldanga, Pearsonpalli, Bhuvandanga and Goalpara,—villages within the intensive area of the Institute of Rural Reconstruction. The significance and the practical utility of planting trees, in a country where deforestation and erosion seriously hamper all agricultural progress, was clearly explained to the villagers who participated in large numbers.

Special mention may be made of the ceremony of tree-planting at Pearsonpalli which took place on Aug. 18. On the day appointed the Santals of the three hamlets assembled together in front of the Suhrid Vidyalaya, formed in a procession and proceeded to the park recently laid out at the entrance of the Palli, with songs and dance, carrying the plant as in a triumphal march. The rhythmical dancing of the

Santal girls dressed in light yellow saris with seasonal flowers pinned into their coiffure, the Brati Balakas with their deep-sounding drums and a large number of men and women dressed in festive array, presented a picturesque sight. Hardly before the procession could reach the park, the heaviest downpour of the season set in. It could not, however, damp the spirit either of the Santals or the spectators from Santiniketan and Sriniketan. The headman of the village placed the sapling in the centre of a tastefully decorated seat constructed inside the park as a resting place for pedestrians. The headman spoke in Santali and after his speech the Santal boys and girls began to dance round the newly-planted sapling till late at night.

...

Severe damage has been caused by the recent flood in the Ajay river. Adhyapaka Khagendranath Bhattacharya who was deputed to carry out a survey of the flood-stricken areas prior to the relief measures being undertaken by the Visva-Bharati, reports as follows :—

The flood in the river Ajay, which had been in spate on the 10th August, had caused wide-spread distress in both the districts of Birbhum and Burdwan. The embankments on both sides of the river gave away at several points and flood-water rushed through those breaches, carrying away houses, crops, and in some cases cattle as well.

The loss suffered by the people in the affected area is believed to be considerable. In the Birbhum district, all the villages on the river-side from Joydevpur to Raipur, and further downwards from Budra-

Sako to Gitga have been very badly affected. In this area, fields which before the flood looked green with crops now look, over a stretch of ten miles like a river with the flood water overflowing. Most of the mud-built houses have completely collapsed. On the other side of the river, in the district of Burdwan the condition is similar. In the villages from Basudha to Bhedia, a distance of nearly fifteen miles, people have suffered severe losses. According to many, such a flood has not been witnessed within the last 25 years.

As soon as the news of the flood reached us, the Visva-Bharati organized prompt relief measures. Subscriptions were spontaneously raised, and donations of rice and cloth came forth generously from the asrama members. Students and staff members of Santiniketan and Sriniketan offered their services as volunteers who went to the affected areas and distributed money, rice and clothes. The relief operations are still continuing, and any further donation for the flood-relief fund will be gratefully accepted by the Karma-Sachiva, Visva-Bharati.

...

Shi Shi, a Chinese student, has been awarded one of the Rathindranath scholarships earmarked for the Siksha-Bhavana.

...

Despite difficulties consequent upon unsettled conditions all round, the Bengali *Visva-Bharati Patrika* made its appearance on the due date. The contents have, we are glad to find, come up to expectation and the articles in their variety and interest promise first-class reading. The place of honour is given to an hitherto

unpublished talk of Gurudeva regarding the ideals of the Visva-Bharati as an institution. This is followed by a lengthy dissertation by Probodh Chandra Sen on *Ahimsa and Rajniti*, in which the writer proves that *Ahimsa* though accepted by Asoka personally as of the highest human value was never forced upon his subjects nor adopted as a state policy by him. He supports his thesis with quotations from Asoka's Edicts. He also traces the subsequent development of the *Ahimsa* ideal in its relation to Indian history down to Harsha Vardhana. Nandalal Bose discourses on the *rasa* element in Art and Poetry in the form of a letter. Letters from Gurudeva which have been published in this issue have got a peculiar interest in that some of them quote personal opinions, hitherto unknown to the public, on Gurudeva's first public work

in English, of persons like Rudolph Eucken, Evelyn Underhill and Stopford Brooke. Abanindranath Tagore's *Mushima* sustaining its subdued pathos throughout, is completed in this issue. Buddhadeva Bose's article on Nationalism, Patriotism and Internationalism will be read with interest. No less interesting is an article on Gurudeva's Art from the pen of Protima Devi. The Editor comes last with an illuminating article on *Ajkal* ('The Present Day') in which he deals within a short compass with the ideals of the Patrika in their relation to the happenings of the present day. On the pictorial side, there are two half-tone blocks from Gurudeva's paintings and a facsimile block of the only known attempt of young Rabindranath in notation-making which was so long in the possession of Sm. Indira Devi.

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VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Number IV

Santiniketan and Sriniketan

The Visva-Bharati has suffered an irreparable loss in the death of Hirendranath Datta, our Upacharya. The death took place at the age of 75 in his Calcutta residence on September 26. At its last meeting the Samsad adopted the following resolution:

"The Samsad places on record its sense of the deepest loss at the passing away of Hirendranath Datta, Upacharya of the Visva-Bharati. An erudite scholar, one of the founders of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Vice-President of the National Council of Education, a trustee of the Visva-Bharati Trust, his death is an irreparable loss to the country as a whole and to the Visva-Bharati in particular. We convey our deepest sympathy to the members of the bereaved family."

...

The Federation of Indian Music and Dancing arranged an impressive ceremony in the Darbhanga Library Hall on Sunday, Sept 22 when a life-size portrait of Gurudeva was presented to the National Government of China through her Consul-General in Calcutta, Dr. C. J. Pao. The Hon'ble Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, Finance

Minister, Bengal, presided and Abanindranath Tagore, Acharya of the Visva-Bharati unveiled the portrait, painted by Ramendranath Chakravarty, one of our ex-students.

In unveiling the portrait our Acharya dwelt on the long and cordial relationship that existed between the two countries, India and China. This relationship, our Acharya observed, flowed through the channels of giving and receiving the best gifts of learning and culture of both the countries. He further mentioned how in his sickbed Gurudeva used to express a desire to pay a second visit to China. He expressed the hope that in Gurudeva's absence his living message would help in cementing the age-old friendship and understanding between China and India. He recalled the words of Tan Lee, Professor Tan's nine year old son, who expressed his grief at the passing away of Gurudeva by saying 'We have lost our mother today.' Acharya Abanindranath wished that the simple words of the child might kindle the path of fusion between the two great peoples of China and India.

We understand that the portrait will be transported by air to Chungking where it will be received on behalf of Chinese

National Government by His Excellency Tai Chi-Tao.

...

As usual we observed the death anniversary of Raja Rammohan Roy on Sept. 27. There was a mandir service in the morning conducted by Pandit Kshitimohan Sen. In the afternoon a meeting was held at Sinha Sadan when tributes were paid to the memory of Rammohan who was described as the maker of modern India.

...

Our Institution will remain closed for the Pujah Holidays from October 8 to November 13, both days inclusive.

...

We all owe a deep debt of gratitude to the Hon'ble Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu, Minister in charge of Public Health and Local Self Government, who, we understand, has sanctioned a Water-supply Scheme for our asrama. The scheme is estimated to cost about Rs 2, 50, 000/- out of which Rs. 1, 50, 000/- has already been recommended for release for the execution of the scheme.

The Aswin number of the *Visva-Bharati Patrika* made its appearance on due date. This number too, like the two preceding ones, contains a number of articles, on diverse subjects, distinguished for their original treatment. The first one is from the pen of Kshiti Mohan Sen and it deals with caste system as it prevailed in ancient India. It also traces the course of its development through centuries and shows how and under what influence it was transformed from a natural social division to a rigid institution. This is followed by a poem from Ashamukul Das who will be remembered as the original

Amal of *Dak Ghar* when it was first staged about twenty five years ago. The poem is addressed to Sanyasi (Gurudeva) and it almost touches the sublime in its pathos. Bhabani Shankar Chaudhuri and Bimala Prasad Mukherjee follow with two articles of literary interest, the former dealing with realism in its higher aspect and the latter on the choice of reading matter and its influence on culture. Gurudeva's letters in this issue, apart from their intrinsic value, reveal an intimate side of his character—the affectionate interest which he used to take in the Tripura Raj family. There is a timely reference to Rammohan Roy—whose death anniversary is celebrated in Aswin—in a remarkable article from the pen of Pramatha Chaudhuri, the Editor, who also pays his tribute in another article to the memory of Hirendranath Datta. This issue contains a notation by Sailaja Ranjan Mazumdar of one of Gurudeva's songs. The *Sanchayana* section in this issue has been made rich by contributions from well known writers and particularly by one from Birbal in his inimitable style.

...

The Samsad of the *Visva-Bharati* has provided for two scholars to be attached to the Rabindranath Adhyapaka of Bengali Literature. The scholarships will be of the value of Rs. 50/- each per month.

...

The extensions of the Cheena-Bhavana are nearly completed. When the finishing touches are put and the two quarters are completed, the Cheena-Bhavana will look an imposing structure. The problem of housing

Continued to page 51

Great News*

By Rabindranath Tagore

(Translated by Dr. Amiya Chakravarty)

Said Kusmi, "You would give me all the big news—so you promised, didn't you, *dadumashay*¹ ? How else could I get educated ?"

Answered *dadumashay*, "But such a sack of big news there would be to carry—with so much of rubbish in it."

"Why not leave those out."

"Little else would remain, then. And that remainder you will think as small news. But that would be the real news."

"Give it to me—the real news."

"So I will."

"Well, *dadumashay*, let me see what skill you have. Tell me the great news of these days, making it ever so small."

"Listen. Work was proceeding in peace. In a *mahajani*² boat there started a row between the sail and the oars. The oars came clattering to the court of the Boatman, and said, "This cannot be endured any longer. That braggart sail of yours, swelling himself, calls us *choto lok*³. Because we, tied night and day to the lower planks must toil, pushing the waters as we proceed, while he moves by whim, not caring for the push of any one's hand. And so he is a *bara lok*. You must decide who is more worthy. If we are *choto lok*, the inferior ones, we shall resign in a body, let us see how you make your boat move." The Boatman, seeing danger ahead, called the oars aside and whispered secretly, "Do not give ear to his words, brothers. He speaks an empty language, that sail. If you strong fellows did not work away, staking life and death, the boat would lie inert altogether. And that sail—he sits there in hollow luxury, perched on the top. At the slightest

* The significance of this parable will be clear to modern readers. The story is taken from "*Galpa Salpa*", a book of Children's Stories, cast in the form of a dialogue between the grandfather and his grand-daughter. Indeed, these stories dedicated to the Poet's grand-daughter, Nandita Debi, were written a few months before the Poet's last illness. The translation is literal, except for one or two expressions which appeared untranslatable ; a few sentences, dealing with the context have been omitted.—*Translator*.

1. *Dadamashay*—grandfather.

2. *Mahajani* boat—boat for carrying merchandise.

3. *Choto lok*—literally, small people ; a common term used abusively with regard to the working classes by the so-called "big people", or "*bara lok*".

touch of stormy wind he flops, folds himself up, and lies low on the boat's thatch. Then all his vain flutterings are silenced, not a word from him at all. But in weal and woe, in danger and in crisis, on the way to the market and the ghat⁴, you are my constant support. It is a pity that you have to carry that useless burden of luxury, to and fro. Who says you are *choto lok*."

But the Boatman was afraid, lest these words be overheard by the sail. So he came to him and whispered into his ear—"Mr. Sail, none ever can be compared with you. Who says that you drive the boat, that is the work of labourers. You move at your own pleasure, and your pals and comrades follow you at your slightest gesture and bidding. And whenever you feel out of breath, you would flop down easefully, and rest. Do not lend your ear, friend, to the parleying of those low-bred oars; so firmly have I tied them up, that splutter as they might, they cannot but work as slaves."

Hearing this, the sail stretched himself, and yawned mightily. But the signs were not good. Those oars are hard-boned fellows, now they lie aslant but who knows when they will stand up straight, slap at the sail and shatter his pride into shreds. Then the world would know that it is the oars who make the boat move, come storm come tornado, whether it be upstream or at ebb-tide."

Queried Kusmi, "Your big news, is it so small as this? You are joking."

Said *dadamashay*, "Joking it seems to be. Very soon this news will become big indeed."

"And then?"

"Then your *dadamashay* will practise keeping time with the strokes of those oars."

"And I?"

"Where the oars creak too much, you will pour a drop of oil."

Dadamashay continued, "True news appears small, like the seeds. And then comes the tree with its branches and foliage. Do you understand now?"

"So I do," said Kusmi. Her face showed that she had not understood. But Kusmi had one virtue, she would not easily admit it to her *dadamashay* that she would not understand. That she is less clever than *Iru Mashi*⁵ is better kept concealed.

4. *Ghat*—Steps on the river bank.

5. *Iru mashi*—Aunt Iru (*Mashi*—mother's sister),

Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday

October 2, being the 74th birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, was observed as a holiday by the asrama.

We began the celebrations with the choral singing of one of Gurudeva's songs in the small hours of the morning. At 8 A. M. there was service in the *mandir* when Pandit Kshitimohan Sen read out one of Gurudeva's addresses on Gandhiji. It said, among other things : "Our reverence goes out to Mahatma whose striving has ever been for truth ; who, to the great good fortune of our country at this time of its entry into the New Age, has never, for the sake of immediate results advised or condoned any departure from the standard of universal morality. He has shown the way how without wholesale massacre freedom may be won. In the course of unrighteous battle death means extinction. In the non-violent battle of righteousness something remains over,—after defeat victory, after death immortality. The Mahatma who has realised this in his own life, compels our belief in this truth...But whether anyone of us is or is not capable of rising to the heights of *ahimsa*, accept it, believe in it, we must ; for have we not before us a man who, in the very thick of this modern age, by his own life and example, holds aloft the standard for us to follow ? And while we pursue the path, with such slow steps as we may, the Mahatma's message will gradually become real for us. This day, therefore is a memorable day, and on every turn of it, year after year, for many a long year, and more and more vividly, as the years go by, must we continue to remember his message."

A meeting was held in Sinha-Sadan with Prof. Tan Yun-Shan in the chair at 4 P.M. when Gurudeva's poem on Gandhiji was read. This was followed by the reading of certain passages from Gandhiji's writings and from another tribute of Gurudeva to the Mahatma which stated *inter alia* : "The birthday of a great man is in fact the birthday of the nation in which he is born. For, the new life, new ideal, new vision, that he holds out to his countryman, inspire them to renew their resolve for the attainment of their cherished goal. Today was born in India a great man who has instilled the vigour of such a new life into his country ; we all worship him and pray that he may long be spared to us to fulfil great and greater ends...Mahatma Gandhi's contribution to the making of a new chapter in human history is indeed a phenomenon of outstanding importance in recent times. Though I have fundamental difference with him on many matters of vital importance, I must not on that account fail to appreciate his service to humanity, and specially to our country, which he has awakened wonderfully by his indomitable life force into a deeper endeavour for achieving his great destiny. Centuries of sloth and inertia he has chased away by the dynamic dash of his personality ; and by his extraordinary powers of unbounded human worth, he has moulded the entire fabric of our national life and forged it ahead in its conscious path of self-development. Such a life so nobly lived is always the object of our sincere admiration. Great men make their appearance at critical

periods of their national history. They come at the call of the time-spirit to right wrongs, to fight evils, that threaten to kill the national life. They have thus to encounter many obstacles, and it is no wonder that they have to face opposition from their own countrymen and that they may not sometimes be wholly right in the matter of working out the various details of their programme ; for none can claim a monopoly of wisdom, not even the greatest of human beings. Nevertheless it would be disastrous if difference of opinion with, or any wrong move by a great man who otherwise rendered invaluable service to his country, be exploited to belittle his greatness and importance of his contribution to human thought and progress."

The President, in his speech, made an appeal for understanding between the people of India and the British Government in the interest of world-peace and free development of the destiny of India. With the singing of the national anthem the function was brought to a close.



In Memoriam—Hirendranath Datta*

By Pramatha Chaudhuri

The first thing I heard on rising yesterday morning was that Hirendranath Datta, my intimate and almost lifelong friend, had passed away.

Ever since hearing this, I have been feeling extremely depressed. One of our Sanskrit poets has said that, if a flower drops out from a cluster, its neighbouring flower feels no pain, but human beings cannot help feeling distressed if one of us drops down from our side.

I first came to know Hirendranath Datta when I had entered on my fifteenth year. He was then about 16 years old. I remember seeing a young man in the grounds of the Presidency College,—tall, handsome, and well-dressed, one of those figures that would never pass in the crowd. One of my class-friends told me that this youth had passed out with great distinction from the Hindu School and joined the Presidency College.

After this I gradually came to know him intimately, and during the last sixty years have walked beside him in many a path of life. Yet in all these long years, not a single word or act of his has ever made me lose the high esteem in which I held him. From the very first I had discovered that we two were cast in different moulds. If I were to explain how our acquaintance ripened into friendship in spite of this, I should have to relate many things about my own life, which I do not think fit to say today.

That Hirendranath Datta was a man of outstanding intellect, high scholastic attainments, and a finished speaker, is a fact well-known to all; but he was something more than that. Amongst those who were educated and passed out of school and college into the arena of life towards the end of the nineteenth century, were a body of young men who felt miserable at the idea of our national degradation. They used to dream of reviving the departed glory of India; they resolved to dedicate themselves to the task of making that dream come true.

Hirendranath may be said to have been the most remarkable person of that lot. He possessed extraordinary singleness of purpose and strength of character. It would not be too much to say that it was he who built the two monuments of his greatness,—the Bengal Academy of Literature and the National Council of Education.

In the establishment of the former, Rabindranath lent a helping hand. But the credit for the preservation and amelioration of the latter is Hirendranath's alone. Probably there are not many who know the immense difficulties he had to overcome in this connection. If these two institutions have contributed to the future uplift of Bengal, they will constitute a lasting tribute to the perseverance and untiring efforts of Hirendranath.

Let me end by quoting a few lines from a letter received the other day from my friend Sj. Atul Chandra Gupta :

“Hiren Babu's death has made me realise clearly that the Bengal of our time is coming to an end. He played no small part in creating the new Bengal of the Swadeshi days. In Hiren Babu one found the combination of thought and action necessary for the India of the future.”

- Hirendranath has completed his life's mission. I offer him my respectful homage.

Hirendranath Datta—A Tribute.

G. M.

An aged banyan tree, hoary and hallowed with the memories of the spiritual practices of the aspirants for Divine Wisdom ; a little away, the river and the sea meeting in bonds of brotherhood and singing the song of the infinite ; a rostrum, decked in spotless white, with that warrior in the realm of truth, Annie Besant, seated in a chair, her eyes raised upwards and more than a couple of thousand men and women of varying colours and creeds assembled under the ever-widening branches of the banyan tree.

“Brother Hirendra Nath Datta”,—

No sooner had these words of welcome and introduction been uttered by the august Chairman than there stepped up a tall, stalwart Roman-like figure, bespectacled and bearing on his face and figure the unmistakable evidence of intense earnestness of aspiration and effort to know the One, who is all-love. He bowed to the Chair and began his address. It was a mine of pure gems culled from the poetry and philosophy of both East and West. And as he sat down not a few in the audience were overheard whispering : What deep scholarship ! What a rich diversity of intellectual interests ! And yet he is as humble as a blade of grass !

Yes, he was like a blade of grass in his humility because all along in his life he had striven to be but the dust below the feet of the Great Teachers. For, like the seeker in the Sufi story, he had realized that when he or self disappeared He, (God) or Self would appear. We, who had met him several times, knew that he had the musk of meticulous devotion in him, though he himself was not aware of its existence within himself. That is why even his left hand did not know what his right hand gave away largely and liberally in the service of Him whom he loved as a son as well as servant.

Hirendranath Datta was a true Vaishnava in the best sense of the term. He loved the One, therefore he served the many ; he loved the many, therefore he served the One. What a shining example of self-effacement to us of the Visva-Bharati !



An Address

The late Hirendranath Datta who had been ailing for about a month, last appeared in public in failing health on August 7 last when he presided over a mammoth meeting held in the Town Hall in Calcutta in commemoration of the first anniversary of Gurudeva's death. The following is the presidential address (based on newspaper reports) delivered by him on that occasion :

A great honour has been done to me by asking me to preside over this meeting held to commemorate the great departed. I know I am not worthy of this honour except for the fact that I have served the cause of our literature for long and have for many years enjoyed the affection of the Poet.

It is now a year that the Poet had left his perishable body and had gone to that sphere of bliss where there is no death.

All through his life the Poet had been worshipper of that holy light—the *Lux Eterna*—by whose light everything is lighted. One *mantram* of the *Upanishads* which remained his lifelong favourite hailed the holy light which 'shines in the recesses of the heart'. Rabindranath had seen the recesses of his heart illumined by that effulgence so that he could repeat with the ancient *Rishis* : 'I have known that Mighty Being, who is beyond the depths of darkness. Indeed I have seen Him who is ever-effulgent.' Rabindranath had thus realised God by direct vision—not only as Light or Wisdom but also as *Anandam*.

He had comprehended Godhead as revealed through the three aspects of *Satyam*, *Sivam* and *Sundaram*.

This living sense of the abiding presence of God in all things, this constant feeling of what Tennyson called 'the actual immanence of God in the infinitesimal atom and in the vastest system' is the true mark of the great Poet—that is the kernel of Rabindranath's genius. Let us then meditate upon the words which he gave us as a testament of faith. 'My eyes never wearied of what they had seen. My wonder of it all never abated. With all my heart and soul I have responded to the echoes of that great unspoken voice which permeates the universe from the beginning of creation till the eternity of time. I thought I had listened to that voice through the ages. When this green earth was decked in colours by the changing cycle of seasons I was unwearied in my participation in that joyous festival. Each dawn and every evening I had stood in reverend silence praying that the profound joy of peace might imperceptively penetrate the recesses of my heart. I have tried to perceive that Unknown Being who is the source of all creation. I have loved this world and bowed to all that is truly great. I have striven for deliverance but have never lost my faith in Man.'

It is in the light of these words of the Poet that we can understand the significance of his wish to go on living, 'in this world of men in the midst of living hearts.'

Rabindranath and English Quakers

By Horace G. Alexander

When Rabindranath Tagore came to England in 1930 to give the Hibbert Lectures in Oxford, he paid two visits to the Quaker College, or Settlement called Woodbrooke, on the outskirts of Birmingham.

C. F. Andrews had declared that he found in Woodbrooke some reminders of Santiniketan, and the fact that Rabindranath Tagore was willing to prolong his stay and to return for a second visit gave us the assurance that he did in fact feel at home with us.

Morning by morning the whole community at Woodbrooke meets together in quiet meditation, and it is open to any one of the company to speak if he feels so impelled.

Rabindranath took part in these devotional meetings as one perfectly attuned to such a method of worship, and on several days he spoke words of life and hope.

One evening he entranced us with a reading from the *The Crescent Moon*. We listened to the voice of childhood itself, claiming the right to live and to enjoy life.

I recall how one member of our college staff, who had been critical of Tagore's poetry as he read it in cold print, was completely captivated by the superb and authentic music of his voice.

Now that his voice is silent, we must try to recapture its music as we read his verses, lest—to quote his own words—

“those that are kissed by eternity
have lost their way in the
publishers' market”.

Rabindranath Tagore was also invited to address the Quaker Yearly Meeting in London in 1930. A crowded assembly of over a thousand members from all over England listened as he spoke with deep passion of the wrongs England was inflicting on India not only by the 'lathi', but by economic and spiritual domination, at that time of conflict.

Some of his hearers were dissatisfied, and did not accept his strictures. But most of those who heard him that day will always recall the courage and deep feeling that inspired his utterance. They knew that Tagore spoke, not as a bigoted nationalist, but as a man of universal spirit who hated cruelty and oppression wherever and however manifested. He was one of the few men of his age who could see the world as one undivided whole, even through the bitter conflicts that seem to tear it to pieces.

May his universal spirit still inspire all who submit themselves to the influence of his art and his teaching !

Obituary

We regret to announce the death of Kamalika, daughter of Nagendranath Aich, an ex-Adhyapaka of this institution. The death took place after a protracted and painful illness on August 27 at Santiniketan. Kamalika was a student of the Sisu-Bibhaga. She will be missed by her teachers and friends to whom she endeared herself by her amiable and sweet disposition.

We convey our deepest sympathy to the bereaved family.

(Continued from page 42)

the large collection of books as well as of accommodation for the staff and students of the department, will be very nearly solved when the constructions are over.

...

We are glad to report that Haiso-Ling Wu, the newly appointed Adhyapaka of the Cheena-Bhavana has recently joined his duties.

...

A table tennis tournament was arranged some time ago for the students of the Patha-Bhavana. The names of the champions of the different groups appear below :

Groups :	Names of champions:
Boys Senior :	Sunil De
Boys Junior :	Arup Guha Takurtha

Boys Sisu-Bivhaga:	Somes Mitra
Girls :	Supriya Roy

...

We are glad to report that our students have done fairly well in the three University Examinations. Out of 13 sent up for the Matriculation Examination 11 passed ; out of 20 sent up for the I. A. Examination 17 passed and out of 18 sent up for the B. A. Examination 8 passed in the pass course and 3 with honours.

...

On August 15 we performed the annual Halakarsana ceremony at Sriniketan. After the usual chanting of Vedic hymns and the singing of some songs of Gurudeva appropriate to the occasion, Charu Chandra Bhattacharya, Dy. Secretary, Sriniketan, read out an address, on the significance of the ceremony, which was given by Gurudeva on a similar occasion, on August 24, in 1939.

Before the ceremony concluded Rathindranath Tagore gave a short discourse in which he referred to Halakarsana ceremony as symbolic of our desire to repay the debt we owe to mother earth. He further said : "Crisis faces us on all sides, at home and abroad. We would say that now when the earth is being upturned by the chariot of recklessness the opportune moment has come to offer our gratitude to earth, our primal mother, on whose green lap civilisation was born."

...

When on July 27 we started our local football league we little thought that various factors would compel us to abandon the fixture. Altogether 20 matches had been played and 8 more remained to be played when the fixture was abandoned. The following table showing how the teams stood may be of some interest to our readers :

Total number of matches played 20
 „ „ „ goals scored 84

No.	Teams	Played	To play	W.	D.	L.	G.F.	G.A.	Pts.
1	Santiniketan Staff & Ex-stdts. ...	5	2	3	2	x	9	2	8
2	Kala- Sangitbhabana ...	5	2	2	1	2	3	3	5
3	Siksha-Bhavana A ...	4	3	1	2	1	1	1	4
4	Siksha-Bhavana B ...	6	1	1	1	4	3	15	3
5	Patha-Bhavana ...	5	2	2	1	2	2	7	5
6	Sriniketan A ...	6	1	4	2	x	20	1	10
7	Sriniketan B ...	5	2	1	2	2	3	8	4
8	Santal Palli ...	4	3	x	1	3	1	5	1

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Santiniketan and Sriniketan

In order to frame rules and regulations of the Indian Centre of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society and to enlarge its membership so as to enable the Society to carry out the aims and objects for which it was founded by Gurudeva a meeting was held at Santiniketan on October 31.

Rathindranath Tagore, Karma-Sachiva, Visva-Bharati, was proposed to the chair. At the outset the Chairman in an introductory discourse emphasised the necessity of organising the Indian Centre in a manner that it might immediately become a functioning body with a membership representative of cultural India. He also placed before the meeting the draft rules and regulation of the Society which were duly adopted.

A provisional Central Committee was set up and Office-Bearers, Honorary Presidents and members of the Working Committee were elected.

Called upon by the Chairman Prof. Tan Yun-Shan, one of the Directors of the Society in China regretted that the war had interfered with the work of the Chinese centre. He also congratulated the Indian Centre for the good work it had done by establishing the Cheena-Bhavana which, he said, had registered considerable progress during the five years of its existence. He then referred to the recent re-organisation of the Society in China, and of the widespread interest that had been evoked both by Chinese and Indian scholars

and leaders in the furtherance of the cultural friendship between the two countries. He emphasised that the object of the Society was cultural and not political and that its ideal was to establish peace and goodwill throughout the world for the benefit of the whole human race.

He thanked the Indian Centre on behalf of Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek, Madame Chiang and President Tai Chi-Tao for having elected the three leaders of his country as Honorary Presidents of the Indian Centre.

He also conveyed his own gratitude for being given the distinction to serve the Central Committee as its Honorary General Secretary.

In conclusion he paid homage to the memory of Gurudeva Rabindranath Tagore, who, he said, was the Founder-President of the Society not merely in name, but had by his own inspiring example revived the age-old Sino-Indian friendship and had thus laid the foundation of the Society. Prof. Tan hoped that under Gurudeva Tagore's auspices and following in his foot-steps the Society might fulfil and achieve its noble aims and objects.

The Karma-Sachiva replying thanked Prof. Tan for his congratulations and complimented him for so ably organising the Sino-Indian Studies at Santiniketan. He further said that but for Prof. Tan's untiring service and devotion in the cause of Sino-

Indian culture and generous financial and spiritual help from China, the Cheena-Bhavana would not have been worthy of the praise so lavishly bestowed on it.

As proposed by Prof. Tan Yun-Shan silent homage was paid to the memory of Gurudeva with all the members standing, and then the meeting was brought to a close.

...

Rathindranath Tagore has placed the letters written to Gurudeva by eminent persons at the disposal of the Granthan-Bibhaga for publication in book-form. The list of correspondents include such famous names as Robert Bridges, W. B. Yeats, Evelyn Underhill, H. B. Havell, Sven Hedin, Count Hermann Keyserling, Romain Rolland, Sir William Rothenstein, Upton Sinclair, Albert Einstein and many others.

The selection and editing of the letters have been entrusted to a Sub-Committee consisting of Charuchandra Bhattacharya, Krishna Kripalani, and Amiya Chakravarty.

...

Probodh Chandra Sen, Rabindranath Adhyapaka of Bengali Literature, delivered his first public lecture at Santiniketan just before the institution broke up for the Pujah Holidays. The subject of his lecture was *Rabindranath on India* and S. Sen brought deep insight and much erudition to bear upon it. We hope to see the lecture in print before long.

...

The academic departments of the Visva-Bharati will resume work as from November 14. We are looking forward to a busy session of sustained hard work during these few months to come. Unusual circumstances had caused distraction of our staff and

students immediately before the holidays began. There will be a great deal to do in order to make up for the time lost thereby, after the holidays are over.

...

Protima Devi, who was keeping indifferent health for some time left the ashrama for a change of climate on Nov. 4. We wish her a speedy recovery.

...

We are sorry to announce the resignation of the following members of the staff :

Adhirchandra Banerji, Santi Dasgupta, Nishapati Manjhi, Saktiranjana Bose, Sarojranjana Chaudhuri and Kuvernath Dwivedi.

Satyendranath Dutta Sarma who was in charge of the carpentry section of the Silpabhavana left our service some time ago. Sudhakanta Rai Chaudhuri has been entrusted with the work of the Lokasiksha Samsad for the time being.

...

The October issue of the Visva-Bharati Hindi Patrika marks the termination of its one year of existence. It opens with a famous song from *Gitanjali* rendered into verse translation by Sudhindra. The translation of Gurudeva's *Red Oleanders* is completed in this number. *Red Oleanders* is admittedly one of the most unique plays of Gurudeva on account of its subtle blending of symbolism and poetry, and the Hindi version is a faithful rendering of the beauty of the original. The article which follows and which is also from Gurudeva's pen, provides a suitable epilogue to the play the inner message of which is further elucidated by an article by Gurdial Mallik entitled *Man and Machine*. In a scholarly dissertation

(Continued to page 62)

The Music of Rabindranath*

By Indira Devi Chaudhuri

I have much pleasure in setting down to the best of my ability, what little I know about the music of our beloved national poet and musician and my revered uncle Rabindranath, for the benefit of the friendly people of China, who hold him and his works in such high esteem, and with whom he has been trying to re-bind the broken bonds of lost centuries.

At the same time, I cannot help feeling, that music is better understood through direct hearing, than through reading the written word. So that foreign music-lovers will appreciate his music through the notations included in this volume, if there be any such, much more readily than through any necessarily incomplete explanation that I may be able to give.

There is a saying that music is the universal language, but I am afraid even that language, like Esperanto, has to be learnt and taught, before it can be used as a common means of communication. I was wondering the other day, why Chinese painting, embroidery, architecture and even perhaps literature (of course through translation) is, and can be, appreciated by foreigners without much study ; whilst Chinese music seems to be a sealed book,—at least to my humble self. Is it because music cannot be translated, firstly ; and secondly, because one so seldom hears Chinese music performed anywhere outside its own home ?—Certainly I have never had that pleasure, though I have spent most of my life in that most cosmopolitan of capitals—Calcutta. Or is it because, thirdly, their natural scale differs (I have a vague idea) from the natural scale of most other civilized nations ? Or because, fourthly, for some psychological reason, it is much easier for the eye to take in the beauty of unfamiliar sights directly, than for the ear to re-act similarly to unfamiliar sounds, or organised noise, as music has been called ?

This preamble is not so irrelevant as may appear at first sight. It serves to emphasize my original contention that in order to appreciate foreign music, it must be heard,—not once but over and over again. However, as my present task is not practical demonstration but theoretical exposition only the next best thing I can do is to try and bring out the distinguishing features of Rabindranath's contridution to Indian music by comparing it with something more widely known, such as European music.

To put it very shortly, and trying to avoid technicalities as far as possible,—to my mind the two main things that differentiate Indian from European music are, firstly, the existence and preponderating influence of *Ragas* or certain well-defined melody-moulds, as they have been aptly called,—the intricacies and niceties of which it requires much time

* The above article forms part of a *Gurudeva Memorial Volume* which is shortly to be brought out in China under the joint auspices of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society and Academia Sinica. The article is being rendered into Chinese.—*Ed.*

and trouble to master and manipulate ; and secondly, the absence of harmony or simultaneous sounding of different notes, which may be said to be the soul of European music. Indian unilateral melody,¹ thus left to itself, has had scope to develop more freely and profusely than its European sister, and to adorn itself with many trills and frills in the course of its wanderings—although within the limits, be it understood, of the particular *Raga* the musician has chosen to interpret ; which freedom of interpretation may be said to constitute a third characteristic.

Now, what distinctive features do we perceive in Rabindranath's music, when held against this age-old Indian background ?—For, if he had made no distinctive contribution to the music of his country, there would have been no need for expatiating upon it. Like that of all great minds, Rabindranath's originality is based upon tradition. And this tradition is solidly founded on the good fortune he had of hearing the best Indian music from the master-singers who used to frequent the family-house at Jorasanko, Calcutta. He was never a regular pupil of theirs, but his native genius drank it all in, as a tree draws life from the surrounding atmosphere. He began composing songs, as well as writing verse, very early in life ; and some of his earliest attempts—familiar to us from childhood,—were the setting to music of love-lyrics in the dialect of Braja (adjoining and akin to Bengal and Bengali), under the pen-name of *Bhanusimha*,—(*Bhanu* and *Ravi* both being synonyms of the sun), dealing with the loves of Radha, the eternal feminine, and Krishna, the divine king-cowherd,—a theme of which Indian poets never tire.

Indeed, the first phase of Rabindranath's songs bears the unmistakable impress of his childhood's traditions. Then comes the second phase, when he goes to supervise the family property or *Zemindari* on the river Padma, living in a houseboat and familiarising himself with the lives and music of the simple village-folk. This glorification of folk-songs and clever combination of the popular with the classical has inspired him ever since, and may be said to constitute his chief claim to originality in the realm of Indian music. Increasing originality and newer combinations and experiments in melody and rhythm mark the third and last phase, which lasted almost till the end.

It may not be out of place to mention here a few general characteristics of Rabindranath's songs (for he never composed any instrumental music). Of course being a poet—and such a great poet,—it goes without saying that the ordinary run of Bengali songs bears no comparison with his as far as wording goes ;—and he has a wonderful knack of wedding and welding sweet words with their appropriate tunes, so as to result in a perfect whole. He also possesses a particular felicity and facility for setting Bengali words to Hindustani classical tunes. Indeed, there is hardly any province of Bengal which has not supplied its quota of tunes to his vast repertory. The number of his songs is legion, and the subject-matter is infinitely varied, comprising the most delicate shades of human emotion ;—though for convenience' sake he himself has divided them roughly into songs of love, religion, the seasons, patriotism and miscellaneous.

As regards melody, though keeping within the general framework of traditional

Ragas, Rabindranath has broken through their rigid caste-system and allowed himself greater freedom of permutation and combination. At the same time, as each of his settings is distinct and individualistic in treatment, the singer has not the same freedom of interpretation in his songs as in the case of traditional Hindustani music, where the delineation of a particular *Raga* or type-tune is the primary object, not the correct rendering of a particular composition. We are here up against the old antagonism between the type and the individual, and the paradox of freedom in one direction leading to subservience in another. When in England in his teens, he first became acquainted with European music, and used to sing English songs for years after. But it is noticeable that European music has not influenced his music to any great extent; though naturally it has added novelty to certain of his compositions. He possessed a fine powerful tenor voice, and used to sing as long as age permitted.

In the domain of rhythm, Rabindranath has abjured the ponderous and difficult in favour of the light and lilting type, his melodies thereby lending themselves to the accompaniment of the dance, of which he is a great patron, and which he has rescued from its outcast position and re-instated in popular estimation. This simplicity and lightness of rhythm is one of the reasons why his songs are free from, in fact opposed to, the innumerable improvisations peculiar to Indian classical music, referred to above, which require slow and stately measures for their freedom of expansion.

To those who are really desirous of obtaining firsthand knowledge of the Poet's music, I would recommend the only reliable book in European notation that I know on the subject, and that is—*Twenty-four Songs of Rabindranath*, by Prof. Arnold Bake, published by the Musee Guimet, Paris. And best of all, I would invite them in the name of our worthy Professor Tan Yun-Shan, to come and stay with him in Cheena Bhavana,—the standing monument of India and China's fraternity and goodwill,—and see with their own eyes and hear with their own ears the beauty and music the Poet has left behind him in his beloved home Santiniketan, the Abode of Peace.



Poetry and Public Opinion

A. Aronson.

The literary critic who is out to discover the response of the reading public to a poet, is today confronted with a new and significant dilemma : either he will determine this response in terms of abstract aesthetic speculation or he will attempt an analysis of the particular social situation that to a considerable extent determines this response. If the literary critic is aware of the diversity and complexity of social phenomena in the modern world, he will formulate the response of the reading public according to the way in which individuals or groups of individuals experience reality at any particular time. If, for instance, he writes a book on Shakespeare in France, he will have to take into account—not so much the aesthetic concepts that were foremost in the minds of a small intellectual elite in France—but the various social situations in their historical context (that is, the various ways in which people experienced reality) which evoked responses of the most varied kind. A Frenchman during the reign of Louis XIV responded to Shakespeare in a fundamentally different way from that of a Frenchman during Voltaire's time or today.

In the past "public opinion" with regard to a poet was limited to a small literate upper-class ; at present we find that public opinion, with an ever-increasing rate of literacy and compulsory education, embraces almost the whole of the population of a country, and that the natural stratification of society is also reflected in the various "public opinions" existing side by side. We can study the public opinion of a past century in books, diaries, letters, and so forth : for they were representative of the opinions of the upper-class, the only one who had indeed any opinions at all to express with regard to poetry and art. Today the literary critic has an infinitely greater opportunity for studying public opinion than before : the daily press, the magazine, the newspaper.

The critic will quite naturally hesitate to plunge into the muddy waters of politically or economically controlled news-distribution. Brought up, as he is, on the abstract concepts of aesthetic speculation, he will consider the opinions expressed in newspapers to be only ephemeral and passing side-shows, and he will refuse at first to take them seriously. On the other hand, however, provided always he is aware of the diversity and complexity of social phenomena, he will realise that nowhere else is public opinion more fully expressed than in these ephemeral and passing side-shows which constitute the daily press. And henceforth he will consider it his function to analyse public opinion in all its stratifications with regard to literature in terms of the material available and, whenever necessary, to counteract the harmful influences emanating from a politically or financially controlled press. This involves the critic for the first time in non-literary and non-

aesthetic speculation : he will place literature again within the context of living human beings, of classes and creeds, of beliefs, and values, and attitudes.

Poetry, or literature in general, plays, significantly enough, an infinitely small part in this centralised and standardised process of contemporary news-distribution. Neither Ezra Pound nor T. S. Eliot have ever been serious front-page news. Herein the newspaper-trusts follow the old saying of Plato that poets and poetry are dangerous to the well-being of a state. There is indeed only one exception in this century : Rabindranath. Not only did millions of newspaper-readers read about him for weeks and months in their daily paper ; his name was also used to guide public opinion along very definite channels. It must be remembered in this connection that Rabindranath came to Europe at a time of intense moral and intellectual crisis ; he came not only as a poet, but as a saviour with a message of peace. And he was confronted by various social situations which determined the response of the peoples of the West to his message and his poetry. This must be clearly understood : every country responded according to historically pre-established standards and values, and within every country the stratification of society was again reflected in its adjustment or maladjustment to this poet from the East.

We find, for instance, that those Anglo-Saxon countries which were least affected by the last war, were less enthusiastic in their welcome to Rabindranath's message than those continental countries where the political breakdown was accompanied by a moral and spiritual crisis. Public opinion as expressed in the newspapers of England and America was frequently indifferent or condescending, while in Germany and other countries in Central Europe, it rises to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. And yet, significantly enough, hardly any literary criticism, properly speaking, can be found in German reviews and comments : most of them deal with the more fundamental problems of culture and civilisation, the impact of the East on the West, Buddhism and Christianity, Violence and Non-Violence, and so forth. A performance of *Chitra* in Berlin will evoke a large number of profound dissertations on the cultural issues of the play and its significance with regard to the "German mind". A performance of the same play in London will result in a few short paragraphs giving the summary of the play, and one or two lucid and well-written pieces of literary criticism in the tradition of Matthew Arnold or Coleridge, published in the *Times Literary Supplement* or the *Manchester Guardian*. And if we remember that literary criticism of this kind has never found a place in German literature, preoccupied as it always has been with the ultimate problems of artistic creation, we shall probably understand why more fundamental but also more controversial issues were discussed in the German press. France was passing through a very similar crisis at that time, and cultural issues of an equally controversial kind were in the foreground. Political ambiguities were almost inevitable in such discussions.

That is why as a rule the Anglo-Saxon response to Rabindranath was—despite certain racial or rather colonial prejudices—friendly and sympathetic (though hardly ever without

condescension), while in the continent we find expressions of admiration and of scepticism side by side. Indeed we can say that the continental response to Rabindranath was infinitely more dynamic than in England or in America. But it was also more controversial and not always "culturally" unbiased. And if we look at the intelligentsia in all these countries we shall find there too a similar difference in response. In the continent Romain Rolland and Keyserling—to select two representative figures out of many others—were essentially dynamic personalities, leaders of small but influential intellectual groups, for ever warring against the existing order of things, non-conformists both in thought and in action. In England those who responded wholeheartedly were people with a more stable civilization at their back, unaffected by the eternal battle of points and counter-points which was raging in the continent: Yeats the poet of dreams and fairies, Rothenstein of the Royal Academy of Arts, Stopford Brooke the Unitarian, Bradley the litterateur, Gilbert Murray the humanist.

The literary critic who is out to discover the response of a continent to the poet from the East, will have to differentiate between the public opinion as expressed in the economically controlled press and the opinions of the intellectual elite. He will have to take into consideration the particular social situations that confronted the poet when travelling from country to country. He will have—regardless of all aesthetic speculations—to scrutinise the particular manner in which individuals or groups of individuals experienced reality, the ever-moving flux of things and people which we call history. Then only will he be able to formulate in a truly synthetic manner the values that went to the making of the beliefs that underlie all appreciation of literature, and the social attitudes that determine the way in which a poet is understood or not.

Alumni News

We are glad to report that Nirmalananda Ghose, one of our ex-students has recently joined the Village Welfare Department at Sriniketan.

...

Our hearty congratulations are due to Devapriya Mukherji, one of our ex-students, who has topped the list of successful graduates of the Calcutta University offering

Honours in Mathematics, at the last examination.

...

We are glad to announce the receipt of a donation of Rs. 1000/- from Birendra-mohan Sen, one of our ex-students. The money is to be utilized for the building of a few class shelters so sorely needed specially during the rainy season.

...

Dance of Nature

G. M.

Some time ago there was a very severe cyclone in the locality where I live and work. During its short spell of twelve hours it wrought havoc and, when eventually it departed, it left behind in its trail damage and destruction. And the people, almost every one of whom was affected in some manner or other, cried out in loud tones of complaint against the raving wrath of Nature.

But was the cyclone, indeed, a revengeful aspect of Nature whom otherwise, when her course is smooth and serene, we call a tender nurse or a compassionate mother—one on whose bosom we find consolation in the hour of our sorrow, joy when the pleasures of the world begin to pall on us ?

What, then, of the so-called dance of Nature ? Is it a mere poetic fancy or a figure of speech ? If not, then is any step in her dance, which is occasionally, *according to us*, not in time or tune, a false step ? Or is it part and parcel of a rhythm, vaster and more vitalizing than the one to which humanity in the ampitheatre is accustomed ? Methinks, it is the latter.

A dancer, who is a genius in the art of fusing the fleshly body in the flame of the spirit, is never satisfied with a prayer-wheel performance of her set piece. She is ever experimenting with new modes with their attendant alterations in the rhythm and rhyme of the poetry of limbs. But when she finds that any one particular gesture in her dance has begun to sink in the rut of routinism she shakes herself up to throw off the mechanical measure. And while doing so, she displays a certain ecstasy and abandon, which in reality, constitutes the very core and crux of her genius.

In the same way whenever the dance of Nature is crystallised into a cut-and-dried pattern or performance, something in her being is divinely dissatisfied. And then she lets herself go, as the common phrase goes. It is this 'abandon' which is revealed in such phenomenon as a cyclone or an earthquake. To mortal eyes, this 'abandon' of her signifies her getting out of step in her dance. But the truth is different from what the visual fact is, just as the truth of the earth revolving round the sun is not visibly warranted.

The truth is that Nature is a genius in her dance. She is not a robot who acts automatically, within a number of laid-down limits. She is a bold experimenter. Her one unending aspiration is to go on ever inventing new measures and modes. Therefore, the balmy breeze and the serene storm both are aspects of her selfsame cosmic dance.

(Continued from page 54)

Baladeva Upadhyaya discusses the Vedic conception of *Rudra*—the awe-inspiring aspect of the godhead. Kshitimohan Sen continues his discussion on the *Death-conquering Message of Rabindranath* while Nandalal Bose deals with the *Essentials of Art*. *Bengali Metre* forms the subject-matter of a learned article by Probodh-chandra Sen and Prahlad Pradhan relates in further details the story of quests for *Indian Manuscripts in Central Asia*. Bikrama Jit Hasrat's *Mingling of Two Oceans* throws fresh light on the communal question from the standpoint of Indian culture. The tender melancholy of Gurudeva's short story entitled *The Last Night* adds to the interest of this number and its attraction is augmented by a tri-colour painting by Abanindranath Tagore and excellent book-reviews.

The *Patrika*, we are happy to say, has been able consistently to maintain a high standard from all points of view, and we would like to hope that the promise of its first year of existence will be more than fulfilled in the year to come.

...

There was an extremely pleasant function at Sriniketan on Sept. 30 when the whole colony went *en fete* on the eve of the autumn recess. There was a community feast in the morning, and later in the afternoon a fancy dress football match was held between the Fat and the Lean, respectively captained by Kedareshwar Guha and Purnachandra Mukherji. The match provided uproarious fun and remained undecided till the end. Charuchandra Bhattacharya who was arbitrarily included in the team of the Fat persons, paraded the field in the effective

disguise of a Kabuliwallah with a menacing scowl on his face and the motley umbrella of his grandson proudly held over his head. A packed programme was also arranged for the evening when the local students displayed their talents for music, recitation and dramatics.

...

There was a ceremony at Sriniketan on Oct. 5 to welcome the advent of Autumn.

...

Krishna Kripalani, Rector, Patha-Bhavana, left for Indore on Oct 26. We understand that he is to attend the Public Schools Conference to be held there, on special invitation of the sponsors of the conference.

...

A cyclone of unprecedented violence swept over the asrama between the midnight of Oct. 16 and the forenoon of Oct. 17. We have it on the authority of some of the oldest inmates of the asrama that a cyclone of such intensity and duration has not been seen for years past. It has caused untold damage to our asrama and to the surrounding villages which it will be hard to get over. Several quarters in the Gurupalli area have become absolutely unsuitable for human habitation and it will take a long time before they are repaired, or replaced by other and suitable residential houses. This circumstance has once again brought the question, or rather the problem, of adequate accommodation for the members of the staff to the fore. That this development should take place at a time when building materials are either controlled or unprocurable or prohibitive on account of their abnormal cost, is a situation much to be regretted. In any case, it is high time that we

should devote our full attention to the matter of steadily building up a fund for coping with the increasing demand for staff quarters. We have been meeting this demand only partially all these years because our funds would not permit us to do all that should have been done. Such a state of affairs is deplorable and we shall have to make an earnest endeavour to make adequate financial provision for this important work.

Emergency makeshift arrangement had to be made for the accommodation of number of families; the students' dormitories came to be of much use in this untoward situation.

The cyclone raged with unabated vehemence till the forenoon of October 17. After it had subsided at last, the asrama presented a spectacle of utter desolation. Several of the long line of trees skirting the main roads of the asrama proper had been completely uprooted, including the ancient banyan near the *Chatimtola*. The row of eucalyptus trees, tall and slender, in the northeast corner of the playground had been mowed down and a little further the himjhuri saplings lay prone on the ground. That was but a small fraction of the damage done to the sylvan population of the asrama. When one considers how each of these trees had been reared with loving care and brought up with unceasing toil to reach a state of maturity, one cannot help meditating upon the futility of it all. Lest we might in a moment of weakness miss the significance of an aspect of creation which reveals itself in a dance of frenzy and wanton destruction, G. M. in a thought-provoking article appearing in the present issue gives us an insight into the secrets of the *Dance of Nature*.

The total rainfall upto Oct. 31 measures 66. 25". The highest rainfall on record is that of the year 1933 when we had 66. 55".

With two more months in hand we may yet beat the record. On Oct. 16, the memorable day when the cyclone was experienced, there was a total rainfall of 8. 25", which is by the way the highest record of rainfall in a day in this locality.

...

The Kartic issue of the *Visva-Bharati Patrika* in Bengali made its appearance as usual during the last week of the month, and as usual this number, too, is rich with a variety of articles on a number of interesting subjects. The first is from the pen of Probodhchandra Sen and deals with Gurudeva's contributions to the age in which he was born and of which he was a representative. Bimalchandra Sinha follows with an expository discourse on the poems which Gurudeva wrote during the last years of his life. The style as well as the substance of this phase in his poetry have been treated in the article in an excellent manner. The *Patrabali* Series in this issue comprises letters written by Gurudeva to the late Mohitchandra Sen and provides interesting reading. Pramatha Chaudhuri has broken new ground with a tale in the orthodox style entitled *Golden Fruit and Diamond Flower*. It is a fairy tale with an inner message for the discriminating reader to discover. Indira Devi, who deals with Gurudeva's music in the article following, has some very valuable suggestions to offer regarding the preservation of the authentic tunes of Gurudeva's songs. The last article is a dissertation on Bengali prosody by Rajshekhar Bose and is written in his characteristic lucid style free from too many technicalities. The *Sanchayana* section is represented by a single article from the pen of Banikantha who deals with a topic which will be found intriguing by many.

A NEW BOOK BY RABINDRANATH POEMS

The poems published in this volume are translated from the original Bengali compositions of Rabindranath Tagore. They were all translated by the Poet himself, with the exception of the last nine poems. They have not been published before in any book. References to the Bengali originals are given in the notes at the end. The poems have been arranged in four sections which roughly correspond to four major divisions in the Poet's writings. This volume includes many songs composed by him during the Swadeshi Movement : "India's Prayer" written on the occasion of the Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress, 1917, and recited by the Poet at its first sitting, and a translation by the Poet of the famous anthem JANA-GANA-MANA ADHINAYAKA, and ends with his last poems (November 3, 1940—July 30, 1941) **Rupees Two and Annas Eight only.**

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VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Number VI



Nandalal Bose

Santiniketan and Sriniketan

Funds are being locally raised for the relief of cyclone-stricken people of Midnapore. In common with all our countrymen we are deeply grieved to learn of the distress prevailing there and sympathise with all those who have sustained loss or damage. We hope and pray that all that is possible would be done to bring speedy relief to the people of Midnapore.

Nearer home the situation is equally unfortunate. The paddy crop has very nearly failed in the neighbourhood this year owing to a pest. Elements have been extremely inclement this year, drought was followed by flood and flood by cyclone and the condition of the local peasants is desperate. It was in such circumstances that Gurudeva wrote the following few lines in 1931, when a flood in the Ajoy river brought about a famine :

অন্নহারা গৃহহারা চায় উপপানে

ডাকে ভগবানে ।

যেদেশে সে ভগবান মাহুশের হৃদয়ে হৃদয়ে

সাড়া দেন বীরূপে দয়ারূপে দুঃখে কষ্টে ভয়ে,

সে দেশের দৈন্ত হ'বে ক্ষয়

হ'বে তার জয় ।

The famished and the homeless
raise their hands towards heaven
and utter the name of God.

Their call will never be in vain in the land
where God's response comes through the
heart of Man
in heroic service and love.

We hope Gurudeva's words of exhortation will not go in vain.

...

The forty-second anniversary of the foundation of the Santiniketan Asrama will be celebrated on the 7th Pous, 1349 B. S. (December 23, 1942). The Varsika Parisat will take place on December 24, at 10 A. M. (N. S. T.). The agenda of the Annual General Meeting is as follows :—

1. Address by the Acharya or some one authorised by the Acharya.
2. Annual Report and Audited Accounts.
3. Election of Karma-Karta (Karma-Sachiva)
4. Election of Members of the Samsad (Governing Body).
5. Appointment of Auditors.
6. Notified Resolutions and Amendments if any.
7. Interpellations, if any.
8. Miscellaneous.
9. Appointment of a Committee for Confirmation of Proceedings.

...

It may be remembered that sometime ago the Samsad of the Visva-Bharati sanctioned payment of a dearness allowance to all employees drawing Rs. 30/- or less per month. It has now been decided to pay a similar allowance to employees drawing salaries between Rs. 30/- and Rs. 50/- per mensem.

...

A highly successful function was arranged at Sriniketan on the occasion of Vijaya Sammelan. Charu Chandra Bhattacharya read out an address given by Gurudeva on a similar occasion in 1906. Sunil Chandra

(Continued on page 78)

A Letter*

Dear Vidyavati,

I do not know how adequately to impart my experience to you. I shall simply speak to you of an incident full of the most poignant sorrow of my life. My youngest son, beautiful in appearance and lovable in character, was about sixteen when he was invited to spend his vacation with a boy friend of his in Monghyr. I hastened to his side when I suddenly received a telegram in Calcutta, informing me of a serious attack of illness causing grave anxiety to his host who was a doctor. The boy lingered for three days after my arrival, trying repeatedly to assure me that he was free from all physical sufferings. When his last moment was about to come I was sitting alone in the dark in an adjoining room, praying intently for his passing away to his next stage of existence in perfect peace and well-being. At a particular point of time my mind seemed to float in a sky where there was neither darkness nor light, but a profound depth of calm, a boundless sea of consciousness without a ripple or murmur. I saw the vision of my son lying in the heart of the Infinite and I was about to cry to my friend, who was nursing the boy in the next room, that the child was safe, that he had found his liberation. I felt like a father who had sent his son across the sea, relieved to learn of his safe arrival and success in finding his place. I felt at once that the physical nearness of our dear ones to ourselves is not the final meaning of their protection. It is merely a means of satisfaction to our own selves and not necessarily the best that could be wished for them. I believe that the love which is true can help the departed spirit in crossing the boundaries of earthly life and finding its spiritual destination. And therefore it should be our sacred duty to direct that love of ours, through concentration of will, towards winning for them their best fulfilment and never to waste it in futile desire for our own consolation. Of course, all bereavements naturally bring sufferings, but let us through them find freedom and joy by realising that they are our sacrifices which we dedicate for the salvation of our beloved ones, and that by our own emancipation we bring emancipation to them also.

With heartfelt sympathy and blessings,

Rabindranath Tagore

* Copy of a letter dated Santiniketan, Dec. 27, 1985, written by Gurudeva to Maharajkumari Vidyavati Devi, of Kasmunda.—Ed.

Nandalal Bose

By A Friend

"Sing to me the song, 'I am not afraid of the storm, for Krishna is the helmsman of the boat of my life'," he said to me one evening when, against the background of star-lit darkness, we sat together on the green carpet of grass. And I obeyed implicitly because of the deep love and high esteem in which I have held him ever since I first met him about two decades ago. The song ended. A short spell of silence supervened, after which we departed homeward along our diverse ways. Once again, thus, I had become aware of my friend's unbounded faith in God,—the rock and refuge of ages,—with which the study of the *Upanisads* and Paramhansa Sri Ramakrishna's teachings has imbued him.

My friend is an artist to his finger-tips and he works mainly with the brush. But as he believes in the law of compensation, he never misses an opportunity of making up the deficiency of the faculty of singing in his make-up by contacting persons who have the gift of music. That is why his best companion in this life has been that seraph among the singers of our earth, Rabindranath Tagore. For aught I know, music might be opening out for him "magic casements" on the ocean of infinite consciousness. And if evolution implies an all-round development of the human personality then, in his next life, may be, my friend would cultivate the art of song. In the meantime he listens often to "unheard songs" in his own soul, which are sweeter than those rendered either by amateurs or by experts.

This friend of mine is no other than Sri Nandalal Bose who, in the first week of this month, entered on the sixtieth year of his life. He is such a vital part of the idealism of Santiniketan—which is a symphony of colour and cadence,—that it is as difficult to speak of him objectively as, say, of the sunlight. And yet on this auspicious occasion I feel I must pay him the humble tribute of my love by dwelling a little on his life.

Sri Nandalal was born at Kharagpur, in the Darbhanga State, on 3rd December, 1883. His father was then the State Engineer. From his very early age he showed a strong bent towards art, as was clearly evident in his clay-modelling and chalk-carving experiments. When he was still not out of his teens he painted some pictures. All these, of course, were his activities outside his academic studies. He passed the Entrance Examination in due course and joined the college, but did not continue there for more than two years. The problem of earning bread for himself, perhaps, led him to the door of a commercial school, but the growing artist in him compelled him to betake himself to the Calcutta Government School of Art, where he completed the prescribed course of studies. It was there that Abanindranath Tagore discovered his genius. The result was that soon afterwards he took him under his special care. During his several years'

apprenticeship under the master Sri Nandalal supplemented his art education by occasional visits to ancient art centres in the country as well as by sitting at the feet of such distinguished artists, both Indian and Japanese, as came, now and again, to Abanindranath's studio.

In 1914 he came to Santiniketan *asrama* for the first time, though he had met its illustrious poet-preceptor some years earlier. His idea was just to look round. But as is the tradition of the place (which once was inhabited by dacoits),—"once arrived, for all times held as hostage," he had to make it his home-*cum*-studio. And so he did in 1919, when he was appointed Director of the Kala-Bhavana.

Of his work in Kala-Bhavana there is no need to speak here. For his own pictures and frescoes and those of scores of his students, who have passed through his hands, are an eloquent testimony to his excellence as a teacher and as an uncanny wielder of the painter's brush. His reputation, however, is not confined only to the walls of Kala-Bhavana. It has travelled far beyond them, throughout the country where his artistic decoration of Congress *pandal* and exhibitions of his pictures have familiarised the people at large with the wizardry of his brush, to Japan and China where he went with Gurudeva in 1924 (when the master-artists there wondered at his creations), to Europe and America where, in the best art-museums, representations of his art have been enjoyed and appreciated by a large number of people.

But as far as we, who are his fellow-residents in the *asrama*, are concerned it is as man that he has impressed and influenced us considerably. In his presence we forget that he is a world-famous figure, but, instead, we take him and treat him as one of us, so complete is his identification with his fellow-beings. *Apropos* of this an anecdote, made public lately by a writer in the annual number of "The Orient" (a weekly of Calcutta), may be quoted. It is said that on one occasion a Santhal, referring to Sri Nandalal, talked in this strain, "We Santhals are all addicted to drink and that is no doubt, a defect in our character. But even among us there are some good men like Gurudeva and Nanda Babu."

This humanity of his, however, is but an aspect of his being inwardly *en rapport* with all life. He understands, for instance, the behaviour of plants and animals in a manner to which many a biologist or zoologist could not lay any pretensions. Not very long ago, a lady's dog fell seriously ill. At about midnight the creature showed symptoms which caused anxiety to the owner. And who do you think set her troubled heart at rest? It was Nanda Babu's homoeopathic dose that cured the animal of its menacing malady. His "treatment" of plants is as efficient as it is affectionate. When the logic of the doctor fails to bring about an appreciable improvement in the condition of any suffering inmate in the *asrama*, the "magic" of his wild herb works wonders. Well might one call him, to borrow a term from an American School of Philosophy,—a "biosophist".

At all the festivities and ceremonial functions in the *asrama* Sri Nandalal's artistic touch is evident in every detail, though invariably for the aesthetic colourfulness of the

ritual he gives credit to his young colleagues. So great is his humility. His child-like delight in the multiform wondrous beauty of the world sets him among those whose forehead is flushed with the light of the eternal dawn.

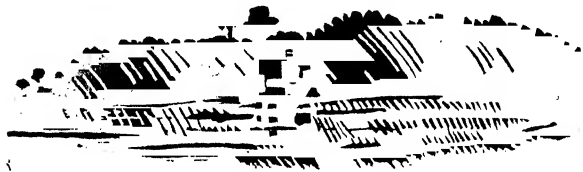
To his humanity and humility he has added, in an abundant measure, humour. His playfulness with his students is proverbial. One day he asked a student of his to draw a donkey.

"But I cannot find one near about," replied the pupil. "Is that so?" rejoined the teacher. And after a pause he added, "But I can find one for you here and now."

"Where, Sir?" inquired the pupil.

And Sri Nandalal answered in all seriousness, "On the other side of your looking-glass." Saying this he walked away. The student did not catch the joke for some time but when a little later he sat in front of the mirror for his toilet he burst into loud laughter. And in that moment of relaxation he realized the meaning of the teacher's instruction to him to draw a donkey. It was to go out of his room (he was a stay-at-home sort of a fellow) if he desired to find subjects for his sketches. For Sri Nandalal Bose lays especial emphasis on the study of Nature which, as Poet Longfellow says, is "the manuscript of God."

Such, then, is Sri Nandalal Bose the man : a dear friend, an honoured colleague and an ideal teacher. And the secret of his being all these is his translating into practice the prayer of all votaries of Truth and Beauty and Love : "Make me a zero, O Lord".



Sidelights On Pous Mela

By Khagendranath Bhattacharya

The economic aspect of the 7th Pous Mela, held at Santiniketan, in 1941, provides an interesting study.

The number of shops, including hawkers and sellers of miscellaneous articles who came to the Mela, was 194 and their total sale was approximately Rs. 12,500/-.

Sweetmeats of various sorts had the highest sale in the Mela—the total on this account being Rs. 3,300/- and contributed nearly 25 % to the total sale-proceeds. Ten tea-stalls also did equally brisk trading—and with a turn-over of Rs. 1,050/- came practically second in the sale list. Over *pan* and cigarettes were spent Rs. 960/-, and food fried in oil—an article of immense popularity among Santhals and lower class purchasers—had a fair sale of Rs. 400/-. Hawkers of *Dal-Mut* earned Rs. 5/- each, and thirty hawkers thus carried off Rs. 150/-.

If the above figures are added up, the total comes to Rs. 5,860/-, and this was the amount which was spent by the visitors in the Mela over what we may call edibles. Edibles thus seem to be the most popular sale items and form nearly 48 % of the total turn-over of goods. And, of course, this is what is to be expected. For many, specially of the poorer class, a Mela is the only occasion which provides a little diversion in their none too happy life. And the traditional way of translating their joy into some real experience is to use up their little savings in sweetmeats. The same can be said of children and womenfolk of middle class families. The sweetmeat sellers were thus the busiest lot and on occasions they were literally surrounded by swarms of customers, men, women and children alike.

Next to edibles, in point of popularity, was a row of 30 shops which called themselves sellers of chemical ornaments, and did transactions worth nearly Rs. 1,000/-. Customers of these shops were both upper and lower class womenfolk. These shops sold chemical ornaments which looked like gold, and sometimes more attractively designed than even gold ornaments. It is perhaps known to very few of us that a great part of these ornaments come from the neighbouring place of Bonpas, in the district of Burdwan. But the ornaments made in Bonpas are, however, of a very crude design, and the better and finer type of chemical ornaments, which are called Ferozabadi, apparently come from Western India. The shops are also found to stock glass bangles, cheap hair oils, lip-sticks, feet-dyes, and cheap stationery.

Conch bangles, or *শাঁখ* coming from Murshidabad, were also an interesting product, exhibited in the Mela. It was something of a surprise for us to learn that Murshidabad, which was known to be famous for her silk, was a centre for the production of conch

bangles as well. The ornaments were, however, of a very crude type and compared to Dacca products they were of much inferior quality. Most of the consumers of the commodity belonged to the Santhal class, though middle class people were seen to make occasional purchases. The total transaction was barely Rs. 250/-.

Cloth-dealers, a row of 28 shops, with their frocks, pull-overs, and coloured *saris* gave a picturesque effect to the Mela. Their total sale came up to Rs. 900/-. 4 stationery shops, with their toys and whistles, combs and hair-oils were also centres of brisk trading activity and did transactions worth Rs. 500/-. The Santhals had their small stationery shops, 15 in number, and sold beads, threads, and small looking-glasses. On the side of arts pictures, photographs and photographic accessories were sold to the extent of Rs. 300/-. Earthen goods made in Chakradharpur, in the district of Manbhum, found a ready sale. Lacquer goods which come from Ilambazar, were not, however, able to fare well. Second-hand coats, quite nice and warm, sold like hot cakes, *nagardolas* and magic shows which knew not a moment's rest earned nearly Rs. 200/-. One circus company sold tickets to the value of Rs. 300/-. On the north-western side of the Mela, sat quietly the sellers of wooden furniture which consisted mostly of doors, cots, and stools made of rough wood in a very crude fashion. These are articles of pure necessity, and at first sight it appeared very improbable that they would find a market in a place which was meant for a purely festive crowd. But strangely enough, there was an unusual demand for these products and the total sale was as high as Rs. 2,375/-. Perhaps the ramshackle houses near about the locality, constructed for providing shelter to the evacuees, account for this phenomenal increase in demand for these products.

Interesting was our experience in the collection of data. The general attitude of all shop-owners to our enquiries was one of distrust, and the reason for it was an apparent fear that additional taxes might be levied on them. To elicit information from women shop owners was almost an impossible job. Some shop-keepers completely disregarded all our questions and went on to describe in great details the Unions from which they had come and how they had been known there as persons of excellent reputation !

We would suggest that the shop-keepers should be advised to give us necessary information, and that this should be a condition precedent to the hiring of stalls. The consumers, too, should be trained to learn to make a better use of their money. After all, who would deny that sweetmeat shops have been too many ? And money spent on this account is not altogether productive. The sale of articles, having educative or wider national interest, should be encouraged. In short, time has come for us to think how to infuse into the Mela a new spirit and to make it an ideal of its kind.

(Continued from page 66)

Sarkar read an appreciation of Gurudeva's vision of Autumn as expressed in his songs. Sajani Kanta Das and Prabodh Chandra Sen, the chief guests of the evening, shared with those present their personal reminiscences of Gurudeva, which threw light on some important aspects of his private life. The function ended with a sumptuous feast in which all the inmates of Sriniketan participated.

...

Vinayaka Masoji, our enterprising Sports Director, has recently laid out the playground according to a well-considered plan. Several additional Badminton courts have been provided and a second Basket-ball court for men has been made ready. The following games are now in progress : Hockey, Cricket, Badminton, Basket-ball, Volley and country games. Our athletes are practising regularly for the annual sports.

...

Suprova Devi, M. A., has been appointed a temporary Adhyapaka of English and Bengali as from December, 1942. Her long experience as a lecturer in the Lady Keane College, Shillong, as well as her distinguished academic career, ensures that her services will be of much help to the academic departments.

We regret to announce the resignation of Lama Angi Wangdi, Scholar and Teacher of Tibetan, Cheena-Bhavana.

...

The following students of the Sangit-Bhavana have been granted Government scholarships for the study of higher Bengali music :—Suchitra Mukherjee, Benoyendra-

nath Palit, Gita Hazra, Nilima Gupta and Prafulla Kumar Das.

...

We are happy to be able to say that the ex-students' bungalow (Praktani), in Sripalli area, is now very nearly ready for occupation. It may be remembered that the foundation of this building was laid last year during the Annual General Meeting of the Asramika Sangha. We hope our ex-students will be able to perform the house-warming ceremony this year during the 7th Pous celebrations.

...

The small two-storey building in the neighbourhood of the Santiniketan Post Office has been completed. This building will house the branch office of the Granthan-Bibhaga. The Journals Office has already been shifted. It is conveniently situated and a local office of its own will considerably facilitate the work of the Publishing Department.

...

The Government of Bengal have decided to maintain a relief centre at Sriniketan under the control and management of the Visva-Bharati. This centre is meant to give shelter to a hundred children of Hindu and Muslim communities who, due to enemy action, may lose their parents and relatives and become homeless. Funds have already been advanced to us for the construction of the Shelter which is almost ready and will, we hope, be fully ready for occupation by the first week of this month.

...

The *Agrahayana* number of the *Visva-Bharati Patrika* (in Bengali) has rightly been called the Santiniketan special number. In his foreword the Editor says that the

entire issue is devoted to the ideals of Santiniketan as set forth by Gurudeva himself—through letters, through addresses and through his other writings. These, apart from their intrinsic value, have acquired a special usefulness in being published in a collected form and as such will have special significance for lovers of Santiniketan. There is an article by Rathindranath Tagore, which deals with the early days in the ashrama.

Though Santiniketan is the main theme, Sriniketan has not been ignored. As an adjunct of Santiniketan, it has its due share of appreciation also.

The number ends with the song “Amader Santiniketan” to which Sailaja Ranjan Mazumdar has added a notation. The number is appropriately illustrated.

...

Last month we availed of the opportunity to inform our readers that the October issue of the *Visva-Bharati Patrika*—our Hindi Quarterly—marks the close of the first year of its existence. It is remarkable that during this short span, it has been able to win a prominent position amongst contemporary Hindi journals. Since its inception the *Patrika* has been able to enlist the invaluable co-operation of eminent scholars, thinkers and critics. It is the only medium offering authentic translations from Gurudeva's literature, hitherto beyond the reach of the non-Bengali Hindi reader. In spite of numerous practical difficulties the *Patrika* gives an earnest of a richer and more promising future.

The opening issue of 1943 commences with Gurudeva's *Chaturanga*—a novel of unusual psychological interest, presenting the subtle yet tense conflict of an ephemeral and

maudlin mysticism *versus* the real yearnings of a soul for certitude,—and the first instalment lays down the foundation of the story. Vidhushekhar Bhattacharya critically examines the question of the authorship of the well known commentaries of the *Upanisads* by Sankaracharya. Benode Behari Mukherjee sets out to discover the real, as opposed to accidental, differences between the art of Abanindranath and that of Nandalal, disserting at length on the contribution to, and influence of the latter upon, the renaissance Indian art. Gurdial Mallik's pen-picture of Nandalal Bose forms a natural supplement to the precedent article. Santi Bhiksu draws attention to the rich and interesting materials of Tibetan studies in Hindi, while V. Wazalwar emphasises the vital importance of voice-culture in music. Hazariprasad Dwivedi surveys the trends of what is known as modern thought. As usual, there are colourful reproductions of paintings by Nandalal Bose and others. Interesting book-reviews and editorial comments close this issue.

Back numbers available for retail sale are few, but some copies of the complete file of 1942 may still be had at the original cost. of Rs 6/- per file, postage free. Subscribers are advised to correspond promptly before the stock is exhausted.

...

Navanna Utsav was performed at Sriniketan Dec. 3. The ceremony was largely attended.

...

We are happy to announce that Sudhiranjan Das, Bar-at-law, one of our ex-students, has just been appointed an Additional Judge of the Calcutta High Court.

We convey to him our hearty congratulations.

...

It was decided at a recent meeting of the Rabindra Museum Sub-Committee to re-name the Museum as Rabindra-Bhavana. Henceforward all correspondence, relating to the Museum, should be addressed to the Curator, Rabindra-Bhavana, Santiniketan, P. O. Bengal.

...

Srimati Supriya Debi, daughter of S. Saroj Ranjan Choudhury, was married, at Sriniketan on December 4, to S. Indujyoti Ghosh, of Visva-Bharati Medical Service. We wish the couple every happiness in life.

...

We offer our congratulations to the following :—

(1) Manimohan Mukherjee, B. Sc., Adhyapaka, Patha-Bhavana, who appeared in the M. A. examination this year as a private candidate and was placed in the First Class (Political Economy and Political Philosophy).

(2) Romesh Chandra Chakravarti, Kavya-Vyakarana-Purana-Tirtha Adhyapaka, Patha-Bhavana, who appeared in the B. A. Examination this year as a private candidate and secured Honours in Bengali.

(3) Soma Kumari Joshi, an ex-student of this institution (Siksha and Kala-Bhavanas) who appeared this year in the M. A. Examination and was placed in the First Class (Ancient Indian History and Culture).



Visva-Bharati Loka-Siksha Samsad Examination Results.

1349 B. S.

The results of the Antya, Adya, Madhya and Provesika examinations of the Visva-Bharati Loka-Siksha Samsad, held in last Sravana, are given below.

List of abbreviations.

Bengali Literature and Language	A	Geography and General Knowledge	C
History and Bharat Sasana	B	Arithmetic or Matri Mangal	D
Hygiene or Science	E		

Provesika

Names of Candidates	Class	Names of Candidates	Class
Sri Birupaksha Poddar	Uttama	Moenuddin Ahmed	Madhyama
Kanailal Roy Chowdhury	"	Manju Roy	"
Binoybhusan Chanda	"	Maya Datta	"
Sunil Kumar Roy	"	Surekha Basu	"
Arpana Sen	"	Sitanath Ponda	"
Sumati Bandopadhyaya	"	Sasanka Sekhar Chakravarti	"
Susil Kumar Majumdar	"	Sibaprasad Chattopadhyaya	"
Rukmininarayan Bhattacharya	"	Gita Roy	"
Nareschandra Das Gupta	"	Sasankasekhar Halder	"
Sudhir Kumar Sen	Madhyama	Rani Roy	"
Prasantanath Bagchi	"	Milan Majumdar	"
Suvarnabala Mandal	"	Satyabrata Roy	"
Sephali Das Gupta	"	Bijoykrishna Upadhyaya	"
Purnima Roy	"	Kumari Pratima Biswas	"
Kumari Sova Mukhapadhyaya	"	Kumari Nila Bhattacharya	"

Adya

Names of Candidates	Class	Names of Candidates	Subjects.
Rangalal Bandopadhyaya	Uttama	Kasinath Chattopadhyaya	Madhyama
Kazi Anwarul Islam	"	Rabindranath Sarkar	"
Sudhirkumar Nandy	Madhyama	Haripada Halder	"
Manoranjan Dutt	"	Sarojlal Roy Chowdhury	"
Malina Sen	"	Surendra Chandra Basak	"
Sudha Piply	"	Jnanendra Mohan Nundy	"
Anilgopal Sen	"	Batakrishna Majumdar	"
Subodh Chandra Baul	Madhyama		

The following candidates have passed in the subjects mentioned against their names :—

Names of Candidates	Class	Names of Candidates	Class
Jayanti Das Gupta	A, C, D, E.	Debeshprasad Chakravarti	A, B, D, E.
KhagendraChandra Malakar	A	Mohanlal Nundy	A, C, D.
Kanai Dey	A, C, D, E.	Sunirmal Mukhopadhyaya	A, C, D, E.
Sabitri Sarkar	A	Manindrabhusan Sarkar	A
Ajit Kumar Das	A, C, D, E.	Suriti Sarkar	A
Kamalkanti Dhar,	A, C, D, E.	Rashbehari Ghose	C, D, E.
Bimal Kumar Bandopadhyaya	A, B.	Jaduprasanna Bhattacharya	A, B, D, E.
Hemanta Kumar Jana	A	Samsuddin Bhunya	A, D, E.
Seikh Nabiar Rahman	A, C, E.	Prabodhkumar Bandopadhyaya	C
Bina Chakravarti	A, D, E.	Dwijendranath Sen	D, E.
Narayan Chandra Bhar	A, C, D, E.	Bamdeb Mukhapadhyaya	A, B, D.
Jyotibhusan Sarkar	A, C, D, E.	M. Anwaruddin	D
Atulkrishna Sen	D	Annapurna Bhattacharya	D, E.
Avarani Majumdar	D, E.	Rama Bandopadhyaya	E
Gayatri Debi	E	Bholaranjan Bhattacharya	D
Amodini Roy	A	Phanibhusan Das	B, D, E.
Pravabati Roy	A	Susil Kumar Mukhapadhyaya	C, D, E.
Amal Kumar Sen	A, C, D, E.	Santosh Kumar Paul	C
	Narendranath Maiti	D	

Madhya

Jagannath Bhattacharya	Madhyama	Monindranath Halder	Madhyama
Bhupati Charan Pakhia	,,	Sitansu Sekhara Ponda	,,
Sova Rani Bose.	,,	Monoranjan Bhattacharya.	

Antya

Ambika Das Chakravarty	Madhyama	Panchugopal Roy	,,
Profulla Chandra Bhowmik	,,	Hirendranath Chakravarty	,,

A NEW BOOK BY RABINDRANATH POEMS

The poems published in this volume are translated from the original Bengal! compositions of Rabindranath Tagore. They were all translated by the Poet himself, with the exception of the last nine poems. They have not been published before in any book. References to the Bengali originals are given in the notes at the end. The poems have been arranged in four sections which roughly correspond to four major divisions in the Poet's writings. This volume includes many songs composed by him during the Swadeshi Movement : "India's Prayer" written on the occasion of the Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress, 1917, and recited by the Poet at its first sitting, and a translation by the Poet of the famous anthem JANA GANA-MANA ADHINAYAKA, and ends with his last poems (November 3, 1940—July 30, 1941) **Rupees Two and Annas Eight only.**

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The Poet recaptures in this volume the scenes and incidents of childhood spent in the midst of one of the most gifted families of India. The old-world Calcutta, with its lumbering hackney carriages, its closed palanquins for ladies, its medley of hawkers, its troupes of itinerant performers and story tellers, as seen through the vivid imagination of a child-genius, lives before our eyes. An unforgettable account of a remarkable child defying all the attempts of his teachers to drag him along the old ruts of learning. **Rupees Two Only.**

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VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Number VII

Santiniketan and Sriniketan

Dr. Abanindranath Tagore, our Acharya, arrived here on December 11. This is his second visit to the asrama as Acharya. We believe the memory of his all too brief a visit last March, induced our staff and students to make exorbitant claims upon him. The result was a string of engagements and our Acharya gladly responded to the various demands made on him. He had to preside over several meetings including the Varshika Parishat which took place on December 23. He personally conducted the rehearsals of *Valmiki Prativa*, gave a series of discourses on Art and allied subjects to the teachers and students of the Kala-Bhavana, performed the opening ceremony of Praktani, and attended a number of social gatherings arranged in his honour. His visit is always a source of inspiration and we hope that this time he will make a longer stay, or, better still, settle down in the asrama, for good and all.

...

The asrama celebrated the forty-second anniversary of its foundation on the 7th Pous (December 23). A Vaitalik party went round the main thoroughfares of the asrama at dawn singing one of Gurudeva's songs. In the morning at 8 a. m. a service was held in the Mandir when Pandit Kshiti-

mohan Sen addressed the congregation. A summary of his address is given elsewhere in this issue of the *News*.

The annual fair which was held as usual in the mela ground proved to be less lively this year. There was a lot of unallotted space which went a-begging but which in normal years would have accommodated a fairly large number of itinerant small tradesman with their large variety of wares. The combat of the Kaviwallahs was greatly appreciated. The combatants enjoyed no small measure of local reputation and the two found their match in each other. The subject was what would be called progressive, namely, *The Capitalist* vs. *The Proletariat* ; and the laurel went to Sheikh Gomani Dewan who championed the cause of the latter. A new item on the programme of entertainments was Kirtan by a well-known executant from a near-by village and his performance came up to expectation. Sahityika, one of our students' literary societies, opened a tea-stall which was liberally patronised by the inmates as well as visitors. The stall has made a handsome profit which, we understand, will be sent as donation for the relief of the cyclone-stricken people of Midnapore.

...

A service was held as usual on the 9th of Pous to commemorate the students, teachers and other workers of the Institution who are no more. Pandit Kshitimohan Sen who conducted the service referring to Gurudeva said that he continued amongst us in the spirit directing our activities and inspiring us with the desire to fulfil the tasks which he had placed before us.

...

A performance of Gurudeva's *Valmiki Prativa* was given on December 23 in connection with the anniversary celebrations. The opera was rehearsed under the direction of our Acharya Indira Devi, and Protima Devi, and the performance came up to expectations. We were planning to give a charity performance of *Valmiki Prativa* early this year in Calcutta in order to raise funds for the relief of the cyclone-stricken people of Midnapore. Now that the city is not a very safe place to visit we have had to abandon the plan.

...

The Amra-Kunja was the venue of a very happy ceremony on Monday, December 14 when Dr. Abanindranath Tagore, our Acharya, presided over a reception given to his disciple, Nandalal Bose, on the occasion of the latter's sixtieth birthday. "This is a very auspicious occasion", our Acharya said, "and I feel like a mother watching with a mingled feeling of pride and wistfulness at a triumphal bridal procession with her beloved son leading the pageant. In the life of every true artist there is a period of courtship. It is only after a mature and intimate understanding that he is actually wedded to art. Etymologically

the Sanskrit equivalent of marriage means fulfilment or *parinaya*. Nandalal has attained that fulfilment. He is now leading a colourful procession with his disciples following him, to that region of ineffable beauty where sits the goddess of Art on her lotus throne. May he succeed in helping his students to march along that pleasant but arduous path and may he reach the shrine of the goddess under the joint blessings of my own Guru and myself." Replying Nandalal Bose expressed his reverence and gratitude for the felicitations offered him and conveyed his love and affection to the young inmates of the asrama. Adhyapaka Nirmal Chandra Chatterji recited on this occasion a poem by Gurudeva written on the fiftieth birthday anniversary of Nandalal Bose and entitled "Blessings of a seventy-year old young man to a boy of fifty."

...

We are glad to report that the Samsad has sanctioned payment of a sum of Rs. 1,000/- as honorarium to Haricharan Banerji, an old Adhyapaka of the asrama, in appreciation of the excellent work which he has been doing in connection with the compiling and editing of *Bangiya Sabdakosh*—an authoritative and comprehensive dictionary of the Bengali language. He has been engaged in this task for the last forty years and up till now about 90 separate numbers have been brought out. The lexicon is very near completion.

...

A pleasant function was arranged at Uttarayana on December 12 when certain representative members of the Calcutta University Institute came to Santiniketan

Varshika Parishat : 1349 B. S.

The Varshika Parishat of the Visva-Bharati was held at Santiniketan on December 24, 1942 in the Amra-Kunja.

After a Vedic song and affirmation of ideals, Dr. Abanindranath Tagore, Acharya of the Visva-Bharati addressed the Sadasyas assembled as follows :—

“I have much pleasure in extending to all of you my most cordial welcome on this happy occasion. The 7th of Pous is sacred to the memory of the Maharshi. On this very day this asrama was established by him and on this day again Gurudeva started at Santiniketan the Brahmacharyasrama which has now developed into the Visva-Bharati. All of us share in the responsibility of preserving the integrity and the essential character of both the organisations—of the asrama as well as of the institution. Between the two of them the Maharshi and Gurudeva had clearly delineated the path that we are to follow. Many dangers and difficulties have beset us from time to time in pursuing this path and some of these obstacles remain. Now, when our forbears are no longer there to direct us, we may become afraid lest we stray away or lose the path altogether. If ever we are overwhelmed by doubts and misgivings let us keep clearly in mind that no obstacle, however insurmountable, can lead us away from the path of Truth along which they have led us. So let us take courage and carry out the programme of activities which they have placed before us.

Santiniketan is like a temple in the very heart of the Visva-Bharati. The anniversary that we are celebrating is in a way a commemoration of those who were the keepers of this temple. Let us today mingle our hearts in this atmosphere of friendliness and devotion. Then only will this ceremony have achieved its intrinsic significance. May our souls harmonise with the rhythm of their noble message and may all our littleness submerge into a feeling of joy abounding. The night of sorrow will be over, the withered tree will blossom and its cool shade will endow us with ineffable peace, if we only take courage and place our faith in the words of those who have had a direct vision of Truth.”

After this the Acharya excused himself on grounds of indisposition and left the Parishat. The business portion of the meeting commenced with Pandit Kshitimohan Sen acting as Chairman.

The following is a synopsis of the Annual Report read by the Karma-Sachiva regarding the activities of the Visva-Bharati during the year 1942 :

The year under review has been a fateful one with a war of devastation moving nearer to our hearth and homes. There has also been a violent upheaval in the country itself and while the rest of India suffered from the inevitable repercussions it would have been futile on our part to hope that we would be left unaffected in our seclusion. Never before in the recent past have there been such rapid and fundamental changes taking

place within so short a time and conditions in the country have been so uncertain that sustained activities in cultural and constructive spheres have been extremely difficult.

During these turbulent times we have tried our utmost to tide over the many difficulties facing us in the light of the words of our Pratisthata Acharya, who always insisted that we should keep Santiniketan 'away from the turmoil of politics' because it is 'out of harmony with our asrama'. Our success or failure will largely be measured, now as well as in the future, by our ability to resist the pressure of present emergencies, and to hold fast to the ideals that are of eternal value.

The Pratisthata-Acharya is no longer with us in the flesh, but his spirit continues to permeate our life in the asrama. His dynamic ideals are best followed in "the plenitude of our creative efforts." We have sought to establish a living memorial to him by instituting several Research Fellowships in his name and memory, by establishing a Rabindra-Bhavana which aims at being a store-house of literature on him and by him, by initiating a Rabindranath Chair of Bengali literature, by starting a monthly cultural journal in Bengali, by arranging to publish a series of letters written by him and to him and by donating every year a memorial gold-medal to a writer of repute dealing with Gurudeva's life and work.

We are fortunate in having Dr. Abanindranath Tagore, our Acharya, in our midst today. More than everything else the visit he paid us in March last, succeeded in reconciling us to our loss. His presence was a source of very great inspiration, he brought us a message of love and comfort, and wherever he went and whatever he did he carried with him the spirit of joy. We hope to be able to have him more and more with us.

Amongst the calamities that have most directly affected us I may mention the severe flood in the Ajoy river and the failure of crops in the neighbourhood. The cyclone which caused a havoc in Midnapore visited us here also and caused severe damage. But what has materially affected us, more than anything else, is the distress brought about by the abnormal rise in the prices of foodstuffs and other commodities. There is extreme hardship among our workers and the dearness allowance, which we have so far been able to provide for a few, has removed only a small part of the distress.

One of the outstanding events of the year under review was the historic visit by Marshal and Madame Chiang Kai-Shek who were accompanied by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The visit was an honour conferred upon the Visva-Bharati, and was one more link forged in the chains that bind our two countries.

It is a matter of gratification to learn that the Bengal Government have sanctioned a water-supply scheme for our asrama at a total cost of Rs. 2,50,000/-.

The educational activities of the various departments at Santiniketan and Sriniketan have been fully maintained.

The staff of the Vidya-Bhavana was considerably strengthened by the appointment of Probodh Chandra Sen to the Rabindranath Chair of Bengali Literature. Pandit Kshitimohan Sen who remained in charge of this department continued to do excellent

work. He acted as Acharya at all important festivities and was deputed to represent the Visva-Bharati at the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Benares Hindu University. Other members of the staff have done valuable research work, which is now awaiting publication.

The extensions to the Cheena-Bhavana are nearing completion. As during the previous years the department benefitted from the regular visits of Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Vidhushekhara Sastri.

Several exhibitions were held in the Kala-Bhavana Museum during the year under review. Many of the Kala-Bhavana students secured appointments as art teachers in different schools during the year.

Owing to the disturbed conditions in the country, the number of new admissions to the Siksha-Bhavana has not reached the usual figure. Due to this, a fall of income is apprehended at Santiniketan. All the normal activities in the Patha-Bhavana were fully maintained. The usual emphasis was given to extra-curricular activities. Our students have done fairly well in the three University examinations.

The Sangit-Bhavana has been greatly benefitted by being under the immediate direction of Smt. Indira Devi Chaudhurani, who took over charge as the Pronetrix of the department in March last. Six students completed the course and it is gratifying to note that two of them are already working as teachers of music in schools. Both Sangit-Bhavana and Kala-Bhavana largely contributed to the success of the seasonal festivities, ceremonies, functions and performances arranged from time to time at Santiniketan and Sriniketan.

The Visva-Bharati Patrika in Hindi, a quarterly journal, has just completed its first year of existence. Within this short span of time the Journal has been able to win a prominent position for itself. Pandit Hazariprasad Dwivedi, the editor, is to be congratulated on the high standard of the journal which he has consistently maintained. The Visva-Bharati Patrika in Bengali, has just published an interesting and useful special issue devoted to the ideals of Santiniketan and Sriniketan as set forth by Gurudeva. This journal, too, has been warmly received by the literary public. Mention must be made here of the Special Abanindranath Number of the Visva-Bharati Quarterly which made its much belated but nevertheless extremely welcome appearance some time ago. This special number is a worthy tribute to the genius of the great Master of Indian Art, and Krishna R. Kripalani, the Editor, is to be warmly congratulated on its production.

All the journals published under the auspices of the Visva-Bharati have been entrusted to our Granthana-Vibhaga which has set up a central Journals' Office at Santiniketan to cope with this additional task. The serial publication of the complete Bengali works of the Pratisthata-Acharya was continued in spite of paper shortage and other attendant difficulties. Four Volumes (X to XIII) of this series were brought out during the year. Several books of Gurudeva had to be reprinted. The sale-figures have exceeded a lakh as against Re. 70,000/- of the previous year—an extremely satisfying result if one considers the enormity of the difficulties of publication work in these days. Charuchandra Bhatta-

charya, Granthana-Sachiva has outlined a scheme to bring out a series of small informative handbooks on all manner of subjects under the name of 'Knowledge of the World' or বিশ্ববিদ্যাসংগ্রহ series.

The Loka-Siksha Samsad has been more active during the year. Two examinations were held, one in Falgun and the other in Sravana. 150 candidates were enrolled from 33 different centres for the Falgun examination, 86 appeared and 62 were successful. For the second examination which took place in Sravana. 167 candidates were enrolled from 35 centres and 92 of them were successful. It has been decided to incorporate the Loka-Siksha Samsad with one of the departments of Sriniketan.

The total number of books in the Visva-Bharati Library is 1,54,293 of which 3,000 were new additions during the year under review. As usual the Library received gifts of books, journals. etc. from official and non-official sources.

Our work at Sriniketan received a much needed impetus when Charuchandra Bhattacharya went to live there and assumed duties of the Deputy Secretary in an honorary capacity. A Village Welfare Board was set up to formulate plans of action. An Education Sub-Committee was formed to consider and solve the basic problems relating to the Siksha-Satra, our experimental school for the education of rural children. The Siksha-Charcha-Bhavana, the Guru-training school acquitted itself well at the final examination; 19 candidates appeared 17 were successful. Afforestation and Anti-erosion experiments were continued during the year and it gives me much pleasure to announce that the I. C. A. R. and the Bengal Government in their Department of Agriculture have approved of our Scheme of Research on the control of Erosion, which is now awaiting formal financial sanction.

During the period under review, Silpa-Bhavana made considerable progress, in spite of innumerable obstacles arising out of transport difficulties and unavailability of raw materials. The total production for the year reached the figure of Rs. 85,449/- and sales Rs. 80,000/-, as against Rs. 75,000/- and Rs. 58,000/- of the previous year. The demand for textile and leather goods has increased beyond all expectations, but unfortunately the department has not been able to take advantage of this opportune time owing to want of any working capital of its own.

Visva-Bharati diplomas will be awarded to the following students who have completed the prescribed course of studies in the Siksha-Bhavana, Kala-Bhavana and Sangit-Bhavana :—Rashiklal Shah, Lal Chand Gaglani, Naresh Dev Burman, Anil Saha, Mena Parmanand Kapadia, Abdul Ahad, Aruna Gupta, Amala Basu, Konika Mukherji, Kaloo Khan, Nilmadhav Singh, Sukriti Roy and Sevarani Maity.

Our position for the financial year 1941-42 was fairly satisfactory. During the year we received educational grants of Rs. 25,000/- each, both from the Central and the Bengal Governments. Besides, our total receipt of donations amounted to Rs. 1,21,601-7-4. The most notable of the donations was the gift of Rs. 80,000/- by Marshal and Madame Chiang Kai-Shek.

In order to remove the long felt wants in the matter of accommodation at Santiniketan the Samsad sanctioned Rs. 20,000/- for building additional staff quarters but owing to the scarcity of building materials satisfactory progress in construction could not be made. In the meantime the problem of adequate accommodation for our staff members have become increasingly acute, especially after the recent cyclone which damaged a large number of quarters.

Owing to the unavailability of building materials the construction of the proposed Andrews Memorial Hospital at Sriniketan could not be taken in hand.

We received intimation from Mahatma Gandhi that he had completed the collection of the balance of Rs. 5 lakhs for the Andrews Memorial Fund. Owing to his arrest the money is tied up and we do not know when it will be made available to us.

The donations so far received in the aid of the Rabindranath Memorial Fund inaugurated by the Visva-Bharati amounts to Rs. 16,000/-. We have received no intimation as to the collection raised by the All-India Tagore Memorial Committee.

The default in the payment of interest by the City College is still continuing. Interest for 28 months from September, 1940 to December, 1942 amounting to Rs. 20,307/- is in arrear.

Both the Central and the Bengal Governments have sanctioned payments of educational grants for the year 1942-43 and it is just likely that we may be able to close our financial year 1942-43 without incurring heavy deficit. Even if the Government grants are made recurring and we continue to receive the other annual grants still we shall require a further sum of Rs. 1,00,000/- every year to enable us to bring the Institution up to the desired standard of efficiency.

We offer our heartfelt thanks to Mr. Leonard K. Elmhirst and his wife, to His Highness The Maharaja Manikya Bahadur of Tripura and to Seth Jugal Kishore Birla and his brothers.

During the year the Karma-Samiti held 13 meetings and the Samsad held 10 meetings. In spite of their many pre-occupations members of both the Committees have evinced the keenest interest in the work of administration.

Before concluding I would like to mention here that in December last I went to Wardha to pay respects to Mahatma Gandhi and to acquaint him with the work we have been doing at Sriniketan and Santiniketan. He assured me that he was always with us in spirit and constantly thinking of the special responsibilities devolving upon us now that Gurudeva was no more. He also expressed the hope that the Visva-Bharati would keep true to the great ideals and the noble traditions that had grown up under the direct inspiration and unique guidance of Gurudeva himself. May we make a concerted effort to realise this hope expressed by one of the staunchest friends and well-wishers of the Visva-Bharati, and may we conduct our activities during the year to come in the light of the following words of Gurudeva :

“Because the time is troubled and the minds of men distracted, all the more must we, through our asrama, maintain our faith in Shantam, Shivam, Advaitam.”

Rathindranath Tagore was elected Karma-Sachiva for a further term and the following were elected members of the Samsad from the different constituencies :—

	{	Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Vidhushekhara Sastri
From General Constituency	{	Apurva Kumar Chanda
		Amiya Chakravarty
		Humayun Kabir
	{	Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis
From Santiniketan-Samiti	{	Nandalal Bose
		Krishna R. Kripalani
From Sriniketan-Samiti	{	Tarak Chandra Dhar.
From Asramika Sangha	{	Sudhiranjan Das

At this point the Parishat was adjourned to consider some of the undisposed items of business on the agenda. The adjourned meeting came off at Uttarayana at 5 p. m. when the Audited Accounts and Balance Sheets for 1941-42 were adopted and Messrs. Ray & Ray, Chartered Accounts were re-elected Auditors for 1942-43. The Parishat adopted a resolution of condolence on the death of the Rt. Hon'ble Sir Akbar Hydari, S.J. Hirendranath Datta and Sri Mahadeva Desai—three valued friends of the Visva-Bharati.

Pous Utsava, 1349 B. S.

The 7th Pous Mandir Service was conducted this year by Pandit Kshitimohan Sen. The following is a brief report of his address :—

It may sound a paradox to want to celebrate at a time when the world is plunged in the deepest gloom, when nature and man seem to have conspired together to bring about a series of misfortunes from which the world is striving in vain to get free. Now when the weak is being trodden underfoot by the haughty pride of the strong, when peace and justice are momentarily being threatened by the hatred of a fratricidal warfare, how can we reconcile ourselves to the idea of a celebration—one may ask. The answer is very plain. The ceremony we are holding today is not one to supply us with an excuse for merry-making. Its significance lies in the contemplation and realisation of the *mantram* which like a bedrock supports the *sadhana* of this asrama. And that *mantram* is *Pita Noh'si*—Thou art our Father. Once we accept that God as the Creator is the father of one and all, we shall immediately see that the corollary, which necessarily follows this principle, is that we are all His children. As long as this fraternal spirit lies neglected and dormant in us so long would we court failure in all our attempts to bring about peace and goodwill. A war to end a war is like trying to quench a fire by feeding it.

The *mantram* consists of two simple words : *Pita Noh'si*. Under its outward plainness these words are instinct with a mighty force that can change the whole face of the world. Only they have to be followed in spirit as well as in word, in thought as well as in deed. The message of all the seers and prophets of all times and climes could be summarised in those two words. In India, the Rishis of the Vedic times, Nanak, Kabir and other saints of the Middle ages, have preached the one and the same truth of fellowship and brotherhood. In recent times when India found herself faced with an alien culture, it fell upon Rammohan to seek to establish a common fellowship between the East and the West based on what India called 'oneness of the whole human race.' The task which was left incomplete by Raja Rammohan was taken up after his death by his worthy disciple—Maharshi Devendranath. After Maharshi it devolved upon Gurudeva to reveal the truth of the *mantram*—*Pita Noh'si*—in word as well as in deed. Poet, as he was, Gurudeva found it easy to sing to his Divine Father and Master in the seclusion of his life by the Padma. That was only a portion of what was demanded of him and hence he had to abandon his sequestered life and come to these arid plains of Santiniketan. Here in the Brahmacharyasrama which he started, he sought to reveal the truth of that *mantram* in and through study and learning. Through various works and activities he tried to give it an expression at the rural reconstruction centre at Sriniketan. Then came a time when he felt that it was not proper to circumscribe the truth within narrow limits. Thus originated the Visva-Bharati which in Gurudeva's own words 'represents India where she has her

wealth of mind which is for all'. He declared that the Visva-Bharati acknowledged India's obligation to offer to others the hospitality of her best culture and India's right to accept from others their best.

It is this vision of a fulfilment which we should celebrate today. The very fact that Gurudeva sent out his invitation to the whole world from this asrama to come and find its shelter here, the fact that he wanted to create here an atmosphere of amity, good fellowship and co-operation so as to enable us to realise the underlying unity of mankind, should fill us with hope and pride. He had visualised a Visva-Bharati, which would do a way with the evil of separateness and slowly and silently but inevitably lead us to a profound sense of unity based on the fatherhood of God and brotherhood Man. This *Utsava* will have achieved its true significance when all over the world we would be able to say in accents of strong and unflinching faith the simple words : *Pita Noh'si* —Thou art our Father !



Christmas Day, 1942

Christmas Day was duly observed in the Amra Kunja in the morning of December 25 with Pandit Kshitimohan Sen conducting the service. In the course of his address Pandit Kshitimohan said, "Jesus Christ was born in the East and was first recognised as the Messiah by the wise men of the East. His faith and religion have come to us through the West. But that is no reason why we should look him upon as a stranger. As a matter of fact we should celebrate the return of Christ's faith to the land of his birth and origin even as we celebrate the return of the Prodigal Son. Never before has Christ suffered such agonies as he is suffering today in the hands of his so-called followers in the West. In their pelf of power the warring nations of the West are repudiating Christ every day of their life. He stands there reviled and crucified and it is up to us—we who are poor and meek, despised and down trodden—to take him down and lay out his mangled corpse and await his resurrection. Christmas will achieve a new and real significance when Christ is born anew amongst us and when his living message of love and peace gains from the depth of our hearts our unequivocal response".

This was followed by an inspiring address by Marjorie Sykes which ran as follows :

Today is Christmas, the festival of Christ. As we are gathered here in his honour, so also groups of his disciples will gather today in all kinds of places all over the world, in crowded cities and remote villages, in tiny islands of the south seas and across the great continent of Africa, in China and also in Japan, among our "friends" and among our "enemies"—and some in prisons and concentration camps.

We think of this invisible host with whom we are united, and many of us remember especially C. F. Andrews, who every Christmas used to sing to us that ancient Christian hymn of rejoicing :—

"O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
Come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and adore him
Born the king of angels.
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord".

There is a lovely story in the New Testament of how at the birth of Jesus the angels sang to the shepherds in the starlit darkness :

"Glory to God in the Highest,
And on earth peace, Goodwill towards men"

There was once a time when, no matter how mercilessly men waged war during the rest of the year, they ceased hostilities on Christmas Day in remembrance of that song of angels. Our modern world no longer pays even that passing homage to the Prince of Peace. Today we know that war will torment men as pitilessly as on other days. The

peace of Christmas is not to be found in the external world ; if we are to find it at all, it must be as the inward and spiritual peace of God. "Peace I leave with you" said Jesus, "My peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth, give I unto you".

What then can Christ mean to us today ? He is one of the greatest leaders that the world has ever known, supreme in courage, loyalty, tender compassion and patient love for all—love not only for his friends who so often disappointed him, but also for those who hated, feared and killed him. But for those who follow him he is even more than a magnificent human leader. His character and life are the expression, the revelation, the incarnation of God most High.

Nor is such a thought of Christ a belittling of the infinite mystery of God. India has felt more deeply than most countries how far beyond our limited human comprehension are the depths of the Being of the Godhead. Yet in India also our greatest saints have taught us to seek God, according to the measure of our human understanding, as "our Father." "Pita noh'si ; pita no bodhi" is the prayer of the Santiniketan asrama. The meaning of that Fatherhood is revealed in Christ. His truth is the truth of God, his humility we may reverently dare to call the humility of God, who seeks in meek and persevering love to win the free love of his children.

The Christian thought of the incarnation of God, of the Word made flesh, goes even deeper than this. If we think of Jesus as a "sheer miracle", as an intrusion into human life of a divine quality otherwise alien to it, we miss half the wonder of his revelation, and much of its power to inspire. It seems to me that our thought of God and life is incomplete and impoverished if we make a cleavage between the human and the divine, between God and the world which he is continually creating and indwelling. It is surely a truer conception which sees God revealed in his whole universe, with that joyful vision for which we here are so indebted to Gurudeva. Human lives are a part of God's world, and each in its degree is a vehicle of his revelation. It is just because it is God's nature to incarnate himself in his universe that he could incarnate himself so fully in Christ.

Christ's whole life work was founded on this faith in the divine life dwelling in man. His appeal was never to the lower passions, never even to the second-best, but to the highest, to the divine spark burning however faintly in every human spirit. For him "the spirit of man is a candle of the Lord", and he never quenched its feeble light but tended it to a clearer flame. And therefore he never gave men up for hopeless, as so many who experience disappointments in their attempts at service are tempted to do. Those who commit themselves to the same experimental faith in 'that of God in every man', and find it true in their own experience, can never give up hope either. They "walk cheerfully over the world, answering to that of God in every man". May we this Christmas find through Christ that unconquerable faith in God and man which the world so deeply needs.

Marjorie Sykes then read out a Christmas message specially sent by the Metropolitan

Bishop of Calcutta for the purpose. The message dealt with 'Christ's way of reconciling men to God'.

"God who is love," the message went, "the immutable will to all goodness, who had suffered wrongs innumerable, at the hands of men, Himself sets out to win them over to fellowship with Himself. He does not wait for those who have wronged Him to change their way of life before He Himself takes the initiative to secure their reconciliation ... Your first step must be to identify yourself with your adversary seeking to share his thoughts and feelings, his trials and struggles, his aims and aspirations. Genuine understanding produces sympathy and opens the way to service which was the second element in Christ's way of reconciliation ... Service under the conditions of a hostile opposition will involve sacrifice but that ultimately proves the attractive power which will lead to the desire for reconciliation. This in brief is God's method of effecting peace and I commend it to all in India today. Ruler and ruled, men of opposing political parties and religious creeds, all who are begging for peace ; will you adopt this way of gaining it and take the initiative without waiting for those of the other side to do so ?"

The service was brought to a close with the singing of a *blajan* by Gurdial Mallik.

(Continued from page 80)

on deputation and felicitated the well-known litterateur Sj. Pramatha Chaudhuri, and presented him with an address. Among other things the address referred to the deathless contributions of Sj. Chaudhuri in the domain of Bengali language and literature. Dr. Abanindranath Tagore, congratulated the Institute on their happy decision. He also gave some interesting reminiscences of the days when Sj. Pramatha Chaudhuri and he himself were boys together. Pandit Kshitimohan Sen recited Vedic hymns wishing Sj. Chaudhuri health, happiness and a long and prosperous life. Sj. Kanti Ghosh and Adhyapaka Prabodh Chandra Sen spoke from among the audience and joined with the representatives of the Institute in offering their reverence and gratitude to Sj. Pramatha Chaudhuri whom they described as "a maker not only of a new type of

literature but also of a new type of literary men."

...

Our Samsad has drawn up a comprehensive scheme for instituting several Research Fellowships in the name and memory of the Pratisthata-Acharya. Four Fellowships are to be awarded for the present on the following subjects : (a) Rabindra Literature in Bengali, (b) Development of Philosophical Thought in India, (c) Rural Economics and (d) Theory and Development of Indian Art and Aesthetics. It may be recalled that Prabodh Chandra Sen has already been appointed to the Rabindranath Chair of Bengali literature. The three remaining posts are expected to be filled up very shortly. The Fellowships shall be awarded in the first instance for one year and will then be renewable annually for four more years after which the Fellowships will be advertised.

The retiring Fellows will be eligible to apply again. The Fellows will be considered members of the Visva-Bharati staff and as such will be subject to the Service Rules prescribed by the Visva-Bharati. They shall ordinarily reside at Santiniketan or at Sriniketan and will be expected to carry on investigations in their respective subjects and to submit, in a form ready for publication, the results of their research and investigations embodied as memoirs or reports. One or more Research Scholars may be attached to a Research Fellow according to the discretion of the Samsad. The Samsad has also provided for the appointment of a Rabindranath Visiting Professor every year. The Professorship shall be awarded to an eminent person who has distinguished himself in Arts, Science or Literature. He will be expected to deliver a course of about five lectures on a subject to be selected by him. The venue of the lectures will be ordinarily at Santiniketan. The Scheme has been sanctioned for the present for two years as an experimental measure and is estimated to cost about Rs. 16,000/-per annum.

...

We regret to announce the resignation of Sudhir Chandra Gupta, Adhyapaka Patha-Bhavana. During the seven years he was with us S. J. Gupta took a leading part in the various activities of the asrama and notably in games and sports in which he was greatly interested. He served very creditably for the space of two years as the Honorary Managing Director of our local Samavaya Bhandar. He will be missed by his colleagues and students here. We wish him every success and happiness in the new walk of

life he has chosen for himself. He has been appointed on the staff of the Imperial Records Department under the Central Government, New Delhi.

...

There was a Volley-Ball contest with the Carmichael Medical College team on December 17. Our team was defeated by two games to one.

...

An exhibition of the recent paintings by Abanindranath Tagore, and Nandalal Bose, and of works done by the staff and students of the Kala-Bhavana during the present term, was held in the Museum during the anniversary celebrations.

The annual *Navanna* ceremony was held as usual at Santiniketan on December 13.

Details are now available as to the warm reception which was given by China to the life-size portrait of Gurudeva presented to the Chinese Government by the Federation of Indian Music and Dancing.

The ceremony of presentation took place on November 22, 1942 at the National Central Library of Chungking with Dr. H. H. Kung, the Finance Minister, representing the recipient and Dr. Chu Chia-Hua, President of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society representing the donors. It was a noteworthy function and more than 800 people, including many departmental heads of the Chinese Government, were present on the occasion.

The following is a summary of the speech given by Dr. Chu Chia-Hua :

Owing to the inconvenience of communication the representative of the Federation

of Indian Music and Dancing could not come over here. The Sino-Indian Cultural Society has therefore been requested by them to arrange this presentation ceremony. As the President of the Society and in full appreciation of the honour done to me by my Indian brethren, I have great pleasure in presenting Dr. Tagore's portrait on their behalf. It makes me very happy to note that our Government has deputed no less a man than Dr. H. H. Kung, Vice-President to the Executive Yuan and Finance Minister to receive the gift.

Dr. Tagore is known all over China as the Poet-Saint of India. A true representative of Indian Culture, throughout his life he held out before the world the typically eastern idea of a civilization based on peace and goodwill, learning and culture. In recent times he was a pioneer in the task of reviving the ancient fellowship between India and China. To the last day of his life he condemned the violence of the aggressor who is attempting to undermine the very foundation of oriental culture and civilization. We cannot be too profoundly grateful for all that he has done to vindicate the claims of humanity and justice. His portrait will always be treasured and cherished by us. It will ever remain a living symbol of the friendship between our two great countries. I take this opportunity to congratulate the Federation of Indian Music and Dancing

on the beautiful way in which they have strengthened the cultural link existing between India and China.

Dr. H. H. Kung thanked the donors of the portrait on behalf of the National Government of China and recalled how the historic visit of Dr. Tagore to China in 1924 served to strengthen the friendship between the two countries and paved the way for further fruitful co-operation between them.

...

The Pous number of the Visva-Bharati Patrika (Bengali) has duly made its appearance and is, as usual, rich in contents. One feature of this issue is that it contains two short stories from the pen of two of our veteran writers—one, with which the issue opens, by Raj Shekhar Bose and the other, which comes at the end, is by the Editor himself. In between Nagendranath Chakravarti discourses at some length on criticism as it prevailed when Sanskrit literature flourished. Nabendu Bose follows up the same theme in its modern application and Bikramjit Hasrat gives us an interesting glimpse of Arabian Culture in pre-Islam days. Gurudeva's letters to Parul Devi in verse-form is another interesting feature of this issue. There also appears in this issue a notation by Indira Devi Chaudhurani of one of Gurudeva's songs. The issue ends with two thought-provoking articles in the *Sanchayana* section by Banikanta.

A NEW BOOK BY RABINDRANATH POEMS

The poems published in this volume are translated from the original Bengali compositions of Rabindranath Tagore. They were all translated by the Poet himself, with the exception of the last nine poems. They have not been published before in any book. References to the Bengali originals are given in the notes at the end. The poems have been arranged in four sections which roughly correspond to four major divisions in the Poet's writings. This volume includes many songs composed by him during the Swadeshi Movement : "India's Prayer" written on the occasion of the Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress, 1917, and recited by the Poet at its first sitting, and a translation by the Poet of the famous anthem JANA-GANA-MANA ADHINAYAKA, and ends with his last poems (November 3, 1940—July 30, 1941) **Rupees Two and Annas Eight only.**

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The Poet recaptures in this volume the scenes and incidents of childhood spent in the midst of one of the most gifted families of India. The old-world Calcutta, with its lumbering hackney carriages, its closed palanquins for ladies, its medley of hawkers, its troupes of itinerant performers and story tellers, as seen through the vivid imagination of a child-genius, lives before our eyes. An unforgettable account of a remarkable child defying all the attempts of his teachers to drag him along the old ruts of learning. **Rupees Two Only.**

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VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Santiniketan and Sriniketan

The death anniversary of Maharshi Devendranath Tagore was celebrated with usual solemnity on January 20. In the morning, Pandit Kshiti Mohan Sen conducted divine service in the *mandir*. In the course of his sermon he dwelt on the spiritual earnestness and integrity of the Maharshi and its abiding illumination and inspiration for us all.

In the afternoon, near the Maharshi's meditation seat under the *Chhatim* tree, a meeting was held under the presidentship of Acharya Abanindranath Tagore, when readings, in Bengali and in English, from the Maharshi's autobiography were given. In the end, the Acharya recounted some of his reminiscences of the Maharshi, which are published elsewhere in this issue.

...

The *Maghotsava* fell this year on January 25. In the morning, the celebrations of this auspicious day were heralded with the singing of one of Gurudeva's songs. In the evening, the *mandir* was artistically decorated with earthen lamps and *alpona*. The divine service was conducted by Srimati Indira Devi, assisted by Pandit Hazari Prasad Dwivedi. Through appropriate songs

and selected passages from Gurudeva's writings, the inner significance of the festival, once again, was brought home to the congregation.

...

Dr. Hadi Hasan, of Aligarh University, Visiting Professor, Islamic Studies Department, Visva-Bharati, visited Santiniketan early last month in response to an invitation from the Visva-Bharati. During his stay he gave a dramatic reading of "Shakuntala" in English, on January 8, as well as delivered a series of three lectures on "The Ass and the Falcon (an historical episode of Persia in the 8th Century, A. D.)," "Persian Wit and Humour" and "Persian Repartee" on the 9th, 11th and January 12, 1943, respectively. The presence of a large number of the members of the staff and of the senior students at all these proved the popularity, which our distinguished guest has come to enjoy among them.

...

Mr. Horace G. Alexander, of the Society of Friends, visited Santiniketan last month. He was accompanied by Miss Marjorie Sykes, whom we were very glad to see once again in our midst. They addressed the

inmates of the asrama on "Quaker International Service and Friends' Ambulance Unit" and "Work for Midnapore Victims" respectively. Their addresses are published elsewhere in this issue.

...

Two more exhibitions of the paintings of Acharya Abanindranath Tagore, done by him during recent years, were held in Kala-Bhavana last month.

...

Sj. B. K. Bhowmik, one of the life-members of the Visva-Bharati, has donated Rs. 1,000/- to the Visva-Bharati, the amount being earmarked for the Rabindra-Bhavana. We convey our grateful thanks to the donor.

...

Srimati Malati Sen, of Lady Irwin College, Delhi, has presented, through Dr. D. M. Sen, a very old and valuable Bengali manuscript of Gurudeva to the Rabindra-Bhavana. We have gratefully accepted her gracious gift.

...

The *Magh* number of the *Visva-Bharati Patrika*, in Bengali, opens with an article by Prabodh Chandra Sen on Gurudeva's conception of India in some of its aspects. It is a continuation of the theme covered by his article on a similar subject, published in a previous issue. Basanta Kumar Chatterjee in his article on "Birth and Caste" shows from the *Shastras* that caste system in its hereditary form prevailed even in the Vedic age. Bimal Chandra Sinha in his article deals with Sanskrit poetry in an exhaustive manner. Acharya Abanindranath Tagore's address on Maharshideva Day (6th *Magh*) forms a feature of this issue. There is a

notation of Vedic hymn by Indira Devi Choudhurani. There is an article by Abaninath Roy and an attempt at dramatic writing by Birbal (an old piece, resuscitated from his portfolio).

...

Sj. Pramatha Chaudhury's well-known story in Bengali, চার ইয়ারি গল্প (Four Friends), which has been translated into English by Srimati Indira Devi, will be published in the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*. The first instalment will appear in the next number of the *Quarterly*, now in the press.

...

Sj. Santideva Ghosh's *Rabindra-Sangit*, which was published on the 7th *Pous*, is an informative and appreciative study of Gurudeva's music, besides being a pioneer attempt in the field. It touches upon the many aspects of Gurudeva's songs and explains the traditions that influenced him and the new modes he initiated to enrich the variety and vitality of Indian music. Sj. Nandalal Bose's sketch of Gurudeva, singing in ecstasy to the accompaniment of the one-stringed instrument, symbolises the key which one has to employ to unlock the door of Gurudeva's genius.

...

At a meeting of the *Samsad*, held on the 24th January, 1943, the following were elected *Pradhans* for a period of two years :—

Mahatma Gandhi ; H. E. Tai-Chi-Tao, Sir Mirza Mohamad Ismail, Mr. L. K. Elmhirst and Sir S. Radhakrishnan.

(Continued on page 106)

Maharshi Devendranath Tagore In Quest of Peace

By Abanindranath Tagore*

Santiniketan and Visva-Bharati—both may claim to be creations of a seeking mind. What was Maharshideva seeking? His search was for One who pervaded the universe and yet was beyond it, who manifested Himself as bliss (*anandam*) and who was immortal. In his days there were many who took up the same *mantram*, the same ideal as himself, but it was only in him that the power of the *mantram* had full play, that the ideal was realized. A boy of eighteen, he accepted *Ishavasyamidam survam* (All that is, the whole universe, is pervaded by Him) as his *mantram* and he worked it out through a whole life of meditation and action. It was not an easy task to realize One who was in the universe and yet beyond it. Maharshideva could not rest content with mere worldly pursuits or with the vanity of luxury and enjoyment. He developed *vairagya*, he grew indifferent to worldly attachments. But it was not the forced indifference of the beggar. He was simply not happy in his surroundings—so he, the prince who had no earthly wants, went out with the hope of realizing One who was above all worldly things. His travels took him to many a land. In India, particularly, there was not a noted place which he did not visit. He travelled in foreign parts, too. His search covered the whole period of his adolescence, his youth down to the approach of old age. What long days of peace and quietude did he not spend on the heights of the Himalayas—sacred to the ancient sages and *yogis* ! I had the chance of seeing him once or twice on his return from the hills, sitting in his room in a half-reclining position, hands folded on his lap and in his eyes—what deep tranquility ! Yet, with all this, he was never indifferent to his domestic duties and social obligations. No details of domestic economy escaped his attention. He knew them all. There was no relaxation in his attention to duties and attention to friends and relations. In the midst of all these activities, however, his soul would remain unperturbed. He would always be absorbed in the contemplation of One who was above and beyond all these. There were, now and then, differences—as there would be in a big joint family—there were obstructions even, but he always kept himself above these things. He never was obstructive himself and he never imposed himself on others. He was above all conflicts. He could be that because he had identified himself with One who was without a second. Complications would now and then arise and then he would leave the family house for a quieter place where he could meditate on the Supreme undisturbed. One such place was our garden-house at Champdani on the Ganges, which was still in the possession of the Tagores. I have heard from the elders of our family that on every 7th of *Pous* anniversary, he would go there with

* English Translation of an address, delivered in Bengali, by Acharyadeva at the Maharshi Day Celebration, held on the 6th of *Magh* last, at Chhatimtala, Santiniketan. Translated by S. J. Kanti Ghosh—Ed. V. B. N.

his spiritual companions and disciples and all the boys of the family. There would be recitals of *Kirtan* songs, besides devotional service. That garden-house was the Santiniketan of his early days.

When that garden-house went out of our possession, Maharshideva's search for another such quiet place was resumed. Once, in the course of one such itineration, when he was on his way to visit the Sinhas of Raipur (Srikanta Babu of that family was a particular friend of his, who would often regale him with his *sitar* play), he found himself in the midst of the arid waste of Bolpur which had to be crossed. One can picture the scene in one's mind—the *palki*-bearers struggling with their load under the middy sun, Maharshideva from his *palki* looking on at the vast expanse stretched before him in an unending panorama, broken only by a single *chhatim* tree extending its shade on the space around. I do not know but Maharshideva might have felt the nearness of the Supreme Self at that particular moment—that Self which stands alone like the tree—*vrikshaiva divi tishtatyekah*.

He had the *palki* stopped under the *chhatim* tree, and as he got down, he said : "I will rest here". This *chhatim* tree was standing erect, surviving the ravages of storms for years, waiting as if for the great seeker who would come and rest his tired limbs under its benign shade. Half of his life he had spent in this search and at last towards the end of his middle age, he found the place of his choice and I can see him even now in my mind's eye, sitting under the shade of this *chhatim* tree, with his gaze fixed on the horizon, where the sun was about to set, murmuring to himself : "He is the repose of my life, the joy of my heart, the peace of my spirit." What a deep resonant voice he had ! I had the good fortune of hearing the *Brahma-mantra*—*Satyam Gnanamanantam Brahma*—uttered by him. His voice seemed to be swelling up from the depth of his inner being. Like the tired bird at the end of its flight, he sought refuge in this nest in the desert of Bolpur. He would contemplate the Supreme in the solitude of its vast expanse—that became his heart's desire. The peace that he found in this abode, he has dedicated to the world. This is how Santiniketan came into being.

The history of the birth of Visva-Bharati is no less strange. If Maharshideva was seeking One who was in the world and yet beyond it, his youngest son was trying to realize Him in the manifestations of Nature—in the beauty of flowers, in the songs of birds and in the service of humanity. Both were seekers—their paths might have been different, one was a *sadhaka*, a *yogi*, the other was a poet, but their aims and ideals were the same. So when Rabikaka* proposed to take charge of the Brahmacharya Asrama at Santiniketan, Maharshideva readily and enthusiastically gave his consent, perhaps because his inner eye had discerned in his youngest son a seeker who, too, was trying to reach the goal through music and rhythm and service. The father built the temple and the son gave it the beautiful setting of a garden, as it were. The two together made it a complete whole—harmonious and beautiful.

* Gurudeva Rabindranath Tagore.

The bliss that the father had found, he did not hoard like a miser within himself. He asked everyone to share it with him. When the son found what he had been seeking in Visva-Bharati,* he invited the whole world to come and share it with him.

People used to ask me : Why of all places your Rabikaka should found his asrama in the dry waste of Birbhum ? I did not understand it then, but I know it now that it was the fittest place that could be chosen. The nest built by the father came, as it were, by inheritance to the son.

In Calcutta, where Rabikaka never felt very well, he would often confide to me : "Calcutta doesn't suit me, Aban. I wonder if I would ever find a shelter anywhere else." I should have replied, perhaps : "Where can there be a place fit to shelter you—you, who have extended your home to the big world ?"

In this Santiniketan he did, however, build a home for himself and for everyone who would come. Like his father he, too, was *Brahma*-minded and like him, too, he was a householder, not a *vairagi*—a renouncer of family ties. If he were that, would it have been possible for him to create this abode of bliss ? This is the secret of the creation of Santiniketan and of Visva-Bharati. The father had proclaimed : "He is the repose of my life, the joy of my heart, the peace of my spirit" ; the son had repeated it in the songs he sang and the poetry he created and expressed it in the manifold activities of his life. These two seekers have established themselves for ever in the heart of Santiniketan and Visva-Bharati. Their united *sadhana* has created this blissful abode. Here is where they realized the Infinite within the finite.



Quaker International Service and the Friends' Ambulance Unit

Horace G. Alexander

In order to understand the outlook of the Friends' Ambulance Unit it is necessary to know something of the origin and history of the Society of Friends itself. The Society, whose members are commonly called Quakers, came into being during the troubled period of the English Civil War, when the great questions of religion were matters of primary importance and subjects of earnest discussion among the ordinary people of the country. The distinctive feature of the Quaker faith, among the many sects of that time, was their belief in a divine spark, "that of God", present however dimly in the soul of every man, and even in the most degraded. Their thought of human nature was, therefore, an essentially optimistic one; for this "inward Light", which shines in all, must make it possible in the end to bring together into mutual respect and understanding even those who differ and hate most deeply.

At the very outset of their history the Quakers found themselves led by this fundamental reverence for man to the conclusion that it was wrong to take part in war, because war is a denial of the sacredness of human personality. One of the most interesting and significant results of this vigorous pacifist thought was the foundation of the state of Pennsylvania by the Quaker leader, William Penn, in the reign of Charles II. This unarmed colony of white men lived with their Red Indian neighbours in a peace of prosperity, founded on justice and respect, at a time when the history of other new American states was stained with violence and bloodshed. The peace of Pennsylvania lasted for the 70 years during which the Quakers retained an effective majority in the new state.

This first enthusiasm, however, died down, and during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the Society, both in England and America, went through a period of quietism, maintaining its "ancient testimonies" but on the whole lacking the vigour of thought and faith to apply them to new situations. But as time went on the Quakers became more alive to the duty of not merely refusing to fight but also of acting as peace-makers and healers of the bitterness which war begets. One of the first of such tasks of international healing took place during the Crimean War. In the course of the war with Russia, the British navy bombarded the coast of Finland, then a Russian province, and destroyed its fishing villages. The Society of Friends raised money, while the war was still going on, for the restoration of these villages, and as soon as hostilities ceased a party of English Quakers carried it to Finland and helped the fishermen in the work of reconstruction. During the Franco-German War of 1870 a similar opportunity arose of serving those who suffered from its ravages. The need of a distinctive badge was felt and an 8-pointed red-and-black star was adopted, which has been the mark of Quaker service abroad ever since.

Passing rapidly over many years of development we come to the war of 1914-18. During this period the Quakers undertook three forms of service in war conditions. One committee befriended the "enemy aliens" in Britain who often suffered much from loneliness and the suspicions of the populace. Another committee devoted itself to the relief of war victims. But a need was felt for some activity by which the young men of the Society could prove that they were as willing to face danger in the relief of suffering as others whose conscience did not forbid them to fight. To meet this need the Friends' Ambulance Unit was established. Through its work several hundreds of young men served on the battlefields of France. The authorities needed their help to supplement the work of the Royal Army Medical Corps and, therefore, accepted their services, even, though they did not become part of the military machine.

With the outbreak of the present war in 1939 the F. A. U. was revived, but the circumstances are now different from those of twenty-five years ago. The Government's control over the man-power of the country through conscription means that as many men as necessary can be drafted into the R. A. M. C., and supplementary work on the part of an independant organisation was not welcomed. The first opportunity for active service was, therefore, afforded by the war between Russia and Finland, when a party of men did ambulance work in Finland. The next field of service was Poland; some members of the Unit there, accompanying Polish refugees on their wanderings through S. E. Europe, were eventually made prisoners of war when the German armies conquered Greece. Another very large field of service is China, where the F. A. U. not only worked in the field and base hospitals but undertook the transport of medical supplies from the port of Rangoon, along the Burma Road, so long as it remained open. Some are working in the Near East. Others have gone to Abyssinia at the Emperor's invitation to help to organise medical services there.

In September 1940, when heavy raiding of London and other British cities began, the F. A. U. members in England found plenty of valuable work they could do, particularly in the provision of more medical aid in shelters, and of after-care for the homeless. They also set up a most useful information service to help those who had suffered in one way or another during raids and did not know what they should do. Experience gained during the months of raiding in England is now being utilised by the eight members of the F.A.U., who have come to India.

With the Japanese advance through Burma, at the beginning of 1942, it was clear that the possibility of air raids on Indian cities was no longer remote. It was also clear that a non-official organisation like the F. A. U. could only make its contribution here if it had the sanction not only of the Viceroy and his Government but also of the leaders of the people. The Government provided the necessary travel facilities; and the two members of the Unit who were first to arrive in India, in June last, visited Mahatma Gandhi, at Sevagram, and received his blessings, even before they reported themselves at Delhi. The Unit, consisting of six men and two women, has made its headquarters at Calcutta and was engaged from July to October in studying the position of A. R. P. there,

making suggestions for the improvement of the services, based on English experience, and making contact with unofficial no less than official organisations.

Up till mid-October, however, the work consisted solely of preparations for an emergency which might never arise—which is wearisome and unsatisfying, however necessary. The Unit, therefore, welcomed the invitation to share in relief work of urgent importance, when the cyclone havoc in the Midnapore district began to be known. Several members visited Midnapore and took part in that work, and one still remains to direct it. Meantime, the first raids on Calcutta have taken place, and the plans which have been worked out over the last six months are being tested.



Work for Midnapore Cyclone Victims

Marjorie Sykes

Before I try to tell you something of the relief work undertaken by various organisations in the district of Midnapore, I must first of all try to give you a picture of the extent of the disaster. The cyclone, which created havoc there, visited Santiniketan also, but the danger here is nothing compared with what happened in fertile Midnapore. In that district a flat and fertile alluvial plain stretches for miles along the coast. It is so low-lying that an earthen dyke, some 20 feet high, has been built to prevent the sea from flooding the country during exceptionally high tides. Five or six miles inland is the little town of Contai where the Friends' Ambulance Unit has its headquarters. It is built on part of a line of a low sandhills, which run for several miles parallel to the coast, and which no doubt once formed the actual shore; the flat land south of these sandhills has been deposited in the course of ages from the silt of the great rivers.

This region received the full fury of the October cyclone. The wind alone did almost unbelievable damage. In Contai itself hardly a building (except the jail!) escaped injury; frail mud and thatch houses were completely wrecked or crushed by falling trees; iron roofs were wrenched off and hurled through the air; close to our own quarters, which had had to be entirely re-roofed after the storm, a strongly built house of brick and mortar, with concrete beams, lay flat on the ground, a large bungalow of brick and stone had a whole corner torn off, as if by a high explosive bomb. The 36 miles of road to the railway station, Contai's "life-line", together with every other road in the area, was blocked by tens of thousands of fallen trees, which seriously hampered rescue work. The few trees, which now remain, stand like gaunt skeletons, with all their smaller branches, and many of their larger ones torn completely away.

The cyclone culminated in a great tidal wave, which was whipped up by the fury of the wind. It broke over the sea-dyke, completely sweeping it away in several places, and poured over all the intervening miles to heap itself against the Contai sandhills. The force of the wave overwhelmed even the strongest swimmer. After three or four days the water receded, leaving desolation. At least 11,000 people were drowned; that is probably a low estimate. All the cattle were drowned, too. Whole villages were completely obliterated, and only a few haggard bamboos or date-palms now mark their sites. Mile after mile of standing rice, nearing harvest, was utterly ruined; the villagers are now cutting what straw remains—there is no other crop. Every tank and pool in the area has been left brackish with salt water and contaminated by the bodies of the dead, so that the water is undrinkable. The only safe water supply is in a few scattered tube-wells, and many villages are 6 or 7 miles distant from any of these. The survivors have lost practically everything, though some of their heavier possessions, brass vessels and farm tools have now

been recovered from the mud in which they were buried. The flood took heavy toll of children ; in at least one village none remained, and we found practically no flood orphans in our area, but many parents who had lost all their children. One poor woman was the only survivor of a household of 20. Another, who owned land and whom we tried to comfort with the thought that better times would come, said, "What is the use of land when there is no one to work it?"

The need for immediate relief was overwhelming. Food and drinking water had to be imported in large amounts into an area whose communications were very poor even before the disaster, and where every road was blocked and every bridge broken. Tens of thousands of people faced the cold weather with only the scanty clothes they happened to be wearing when the flood overtook them. Very many had no shelter. Steps had to be taken to prevent the outbreak of serious epidemics among the starving people. At first, so great was the need and so limited the resources that one meal in two days was the maximum that could be given. The situation has slowly been improved. The military stationed in the area cleared the roads with dynamite and threw up temporary bridges. Regular relief centres have been established in the Contai area by the Government, the Ramakrishna Mission, and the Hindu Mahasabha. Here food, money doles, clothes and blankets are being distributed, and medical relief is being given. The Upper India Society, in which the local emergency committee's work was merged, has done a most valuable piece of work in the distribution of drinking water, sending regular daily consignments by boat from Contai down the canals to remote sea-ward villages, several miles from any other safe supply. So far inoculation and other hygiene measures have proved fairly effective, and there has been no serious epidemic ; the scattered cases of cholera have so far not been of a virulent type, but diseases like diarrhoea and dysentery seem to be on the increase owing to the bad water conditions.

It is not yet possible to see the end of the need for what may be called "short-term relief"—the supply of the minimum day-to-day wants of the population. But the situation also calls for "long-term" reconstruction plans, on a scale which only the Government can effectively tackle, if the district is to recover a prosperity in proportion to its natural riches within a reasonable time. Some of these plans are now being put in hand. The Government agricultural officers have surveyed the regions, impregnated with salt water, and are now analysing typical specimens of soil. They will then be able to judge what crops it will be possible to grow after the next monsoon, and how far different areas will need different treatment. More tube-wells are now being sunk in the area, but it is to be hoped that public opinion will press for many more of these, and also for a thorough reconstruction and improvement of the sea-wall so that such a calamity may not be repeated. So far only the repair of the worst breaches has been taken in hand, and is giving employment to some local labour. Loans are also being given for the re-building of the ruined villages, and here and there one sees a new house beginning to rise. A pressing and difficult problem is that of the replacement of the drowned cattle,

on which the work of the fields depends, and whose milk is so much needed. But to import cattle means to import fodder, too, for in the very worst areas not even grass will grow as yet. The committee in Calcutta, on which all agencies actively engaged in relief are represented, is giving its present attention to this question.

The mention of the cattle problem brings me to the work which the F. A. U. has undertaken—that of the distribution of milk for young children and nursing mothers in the worst affected areas of the extreme south. This meant a strip of coastal plain some 7 miles wide, bounded on the north by the road, which runs parallel to the sea from Rasalpur in the east through Contai to Ramnagar in the south-west. Wide areas north of this road are in almost as great need as the southern area, and it is heart-rending to have to say “No” to deputations asking for milk for their children ; but with the limited personnel and transport available during the 2 weeks of my stay we could cover only one section even of the desperately needy southern area. The milk (Glaxo and other varieties of powdered milk, mixed by the worker with the correct amount of water) is distributed by means of daily roadside canteens. The bus or boat or pedestrian (all three methods of transport have to be used) stops at sites selected so as to be within reach of as many villages as possible. Pregnant women and nursing mothers of small babies are persuaded to drink the daily ration of one tumbler of milk there and then in the presence of the relief worker, so that their own health may be maintained and their own milk be sufficient for the child. It is no easy task to persuade these shy women to drink in public, even under the shelter of their *saris* ! When the children are older, between 1 and 3 years, they drink as much as they can of the ration themselves and the mother finishes it. We are unfortunately able to give milk to children over 3 only if they are sickly and in special need. Those whose claims to a ration are admitted are given tickets which they must bring daily to the canteen. It is pathetic to see some hungry little mite seize his tumbler and begin to drink even before the full ration has been poured in. Such a canteen system is by far the best method of distribution, for it ensures as no other can that no milk is wasted, and that it actually reaches those in greatest need. But to extend canteens over the whole of our area would require an absolutely dependable supply of volunteers and transport on a scale there is little hope of achieving. The canteens working in early January fed about 1000 children daily out of perhaps 9000 needy, but we could do no more then. A day or two after I left a car was obtained, which should help to extend the work, and plans were under consideration for adopting some form of dole in new areas by which a weekly allowance of dry powder would be given to eligible mothers with instructions for mixing.

This work should really be continued until an alternative milk supply becomes available, but whether the F. A. U. can continue it so long is by no means certain. They plan at present, however, to continue till the end of February, and members of Santiniketan who are interested, both men and women, could give very practical assistance by helping to maintain a supply of volunteers. If the F. A. U. in Calcutta knew that a group of young workers from Santiniketan was prepared to come at call, and remain for a

definite period of 10 days or a fortnight, it would be of the greatest value. It is a privilege to help those brave and patient people even in a small way. The material help we can give is very small, but of at least equal value. I believe, it is the attitude of human sympathy and understanding which we seek to preserve, and which in a calamity of this magnitude is often so difficult for the hard pressed official to maintain. There is an opportunity in Contai for service in the best traditions of Santiniketan.

(Continued from page 96)

Prabhat Mohan Banerji assumed charge of the Loka-Shiksha office, at Sriniketan, last month.

...

Prafulla Chandra Roy, M. Sc., has been appointed Adhyapaka of Chemistry in the Siksha-Bhavana.

...

Anil Kumar Chatterji, M. A., in Commerce, Manager of the *Visva-Bharati Patrika*, has been appointed Lecturer in Commerce in the Berhampur branch of the City College. We congratulate him on his appointment.

...

Monimohan Mukherji, M. A. resigned from the Patha-Bhavana staff this month in order to join as a research scholar in the Statistical Laboratory, at Calcutta. During the period he worked at Santiniketan he actively associated himself with the extra-curricular programme of the students, particularly sports. He will be missed very much on the playground and in the class-room, as also by his colleagues. We wish him God-speed in his new sphere of work.

...

Srimati Suprava Devi, M. A., who had joined the Patha-Bhavana staff temporarily, left Santiniketan on the 31st January, 1943.

...

Last month the students of Siksha-Satra, Sriniketan, had their "camp" in the jungle of Chowpahari for three days, while those of Siksha-Charcha had a two-day excursion to Sialah, on the bank of the Kopai. The daily camp-fires enabled them to make intimate contacts with the villagers. Their camp life was to them an exercise in the science and art of self-government.

...

The students and staff of Kala-Bhavana had a five-day excursion on the bank of the Kopai towards the beginning of last month.

...

There have been 36 new admissions in the Patha-Bhavana this year.

...

Sriniketan will celebrate the anniversary of its foundation on 6th and 7th February, 1943.

...

The annual sports were held on 25th, 27th and 28th January, 1943. The various items on the programme attracted all, both old and young. The presence of the Acharya on the sport ground was a great impetus.

There were 73 items on the programme, and 194 competitors. Of these 68 were girls and they competed in 24 items.

Patha-Bhavana showed remarkable progress by beating their own previous records in several events and special mention must be made of Ashim Roy for Pole Vault

and Tapan Neogi for winning 100 yds. ; 220 ; 440 ; and Long Jump. The Cross-Country Race—short-cut to Sriniketan—was won by Pranesh. The Relay Race for girls was won by Patha-Bhavana team. There was a stiff tussle between staff and students in the Tug-of-War which the staff won. But a stiffer tussle, that filled the air with cheers, was between Girl teams of Kala-Sangita and Patha-Siksha, which the former won. In boys' senior and open events Sriniketan put up a keen competition.

The whole programme was directed with commendable skill and smoothness,—thanks to the infectious interest of the Director, V. Masoji, and his colleagues.

The following are the names of cham-

pions and runners-up in their respective groups :

BOYS

Pranesh Bhowmik	— 80 Pts.	} Open
Sudhi Ranjan Ghosh	— 12 "	
Ajit Roy	— 18 "	} Senior
Pranesh	— 17 "	
Santipriya Roy	— 22 "	} School A
Ashim Roy	— 20 "	
Sujan Singh	— 14 "	} School B
Nripendra Narayan Singh	— 19 "	
Dwipesh Roy Chowdhury	— 22 "	} School C
Barendra Sen	— 15 "	

GIRLS

Nilima Gupta	— 20 "	} Girls A
Preeti Pande	— 19 "	
Arati Chaliha	— 14 "	} Girls B
Sushima Das-Gupta	— 12 "	
Supriya Roy	— 14 "	} Girls C
Juthika Mitra	— 11 "	

Alumni News

At the Annual General Meeting of the Asramika Sangha, that was held on the morning of 8th *Pous* in Amrakunja (Carminichael Veda), Pandit Haricharan Bandyopadhyaya, the oldest among the teachers living in the asrama at present, presided. In the course of his address he said :—

"It is needless to say that I feel honoured to preside over this annual general meeting of my old pupils. I can well understand that in choosing me as the president you have paid your respects not to my personal wisdom and scholarship but to the relationship that has been forged between you and me during the last forty years. It is, therefore, as an old *guru* of yours that I address you today and may my words be worthy of the occasion.

"How can I forget that for the last forty years when we were entrusted with the pleasing task of teaching you, we, in our turn, enjoyed the rare privilege of being taught by our Asrama *guru* who was *guru* to every one of us ? In the innumerable teachers' meetings, presided over by him, he was never tired of helping us with diverse valuable advice with regard to the aims and ideals of the institution as well as its day-to-day activities. These, it is our sacred duty to convey to you and, in your turn, you must pass them on to the coming generation."

Then he narrated briefly the daily life of the boys in the early days of Santiniketan and explained the spiritual significance of the life of discipline practised in those days. It was not an absolute adoption from the *Samhita* but Gurudeva's own adaptation, suited to the life and needs of modern times.

...

The following office-bearers for the year 1943 were elected at the last annual meeting of the Asramika Sangha :—

President : Sudhi Ranjan Das. *Vice President* : Pulin Behari Sen, *Secretary* : Sib Das Roy. *Asstt. Secretary* : Prasanta Kumar Bhattacharya.

...

Sj. Tribhuvan Kumar Pande, an ex-student of Siksha-Bhavana, was married to Srimati Daya Devi Pande on the 26th January, 1943, at Almora. We wish the couple every happiness in life.

...

We are glad to be informed that Sj. Jogindar Singh Khaira, an ex-student of Siksha Bhavana, has obtained the King's Commission. At present he is receiving training in the Indian Military Academy, at Dehra Dun. Our congratulations to him.

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Gandhiji

"Whenever unrighteousness envelopes the world I pierce through it, again and again, as a ray of righteousness !" Thus through aeons of human evolution has repeatedly rung the Voice of History, which is the Voice of God.

Gandhiji is a fragment of such a ray of righteousness. In a world, drowned in the darkness of delusion,—born of pride of power, both of the machine and of the muscle,—he appeared like a star to show to humanity how far it had strayed from the sunlit path of truth and love.

Ages ago, when the first tender sprout of green worked, Trojan-like, its way through the obstinate opposition of the earth, the universe of atoms and elements rejoiced at this testimony and triumph of life. Similarly, when Gandhiji came down amongst us from his hill-top of vision, we who dwelt in the valleys looked up and felt the re-birth and re-orientation of the spirit within us.

"Deliverance is not for me in renunciation," said he to us in reply, when we asked him why he had descended from the heights of snow-white purity to soil his traveller's robe with the dust and dirt of our streets.

He continued, "My master is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and the stone-breaker is breaking stones. His garment is soiled with the dust of toil. Mine, too, must have that inky insignia of effort in the service of my fellow-men."

And at once he set his hands to the plough and to the spinning-wheel, to the broom-stick and to the bucket. Day in and day out, he continued these self-consecrated activities in the sight of the Divine Worker. His spotless loin-cloth was, consequently, covered with specks of dirt, which sprayed up as he went about through the filth and fumes.

But these specks of dirt scintillated like the stars, in whose light hundreds and thousands walked the way of life.

So to-day we find Gandhiji there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground to grow food for the famished, where the weaver is weaving cloth to clothe the naked, where the oppressed is standing up against the power of insolent might, where the pilgrim is wending his weary way to the shrine of truth and where the woman, wrapped in the valour of her virtue, is inspiring man to fight the lonesome fight for Right.

Phoenix-like he has risen again in millions of hearts.

Long live Gandhiji !

G. M.

A Day of Destiny

Today Gandhiji has broken his fast. What a relief it is !—even if a sort of vague fear still clings to it. Who will not rejoice that the most precious life in our country is spared to us, even though the gates of prison will once more shut out its rays and leave this unhappy country in darkness and gloom ! For three weeks India's heart has beat in trepidation and fear, now sinking in suspense, now rising in hope, now beating in the fury of impotent rage. Hands were raised in supplication, voices in entreaty, only to fall back in despair and bitterness. Till at last every heart and hand was raised in prayer, not to the power that rules by accident, but to the only power that abides, the power which Gurudev invoked as *Bharata Bhagya Vidhata* (The Dispenser of India's Destiny). To that power our heads were bowed in reverence and thanksgiving when the whole asrama met in the Mandir this morning to celebrate by a special service the happy and long prayed-for hour. We left the Mandir gates, humbled and chastened and made strong with a new hope. In a world where the slaughtering of others is called heroism, here is a man who subjects himself to unmeasured suffering and offers his own life that others might perceive the difference between the righteous and the unrighteous. To day the men of Europe and America, drunk on the fumes of their own violent passions, might consider him a crank, but a day will come when they will bend their heads at the miracle that such a man lived in such a crazy age. Then when he is no more, they may invoke his spirit, and, for want of nobler words, may recall those of India's Poet addressed to another such soul who once walked this earth :

“Man's heart is anguished with the fever of unrest,
With the poison of self-seeking,
With a thirst that knows no end.
Countries far and wide flaunt on their foreheads
The blood-red mark of hatred.
Touch them with thy right hand,
Make them one in spirit,
Bring harmony into their life,
Bring rhythm of beauty.
O Serene, O Free,
In thine immeasurable mercy and goodness
Wipe away all dark stains from the heart of this earth.”

K. R. K.

Santiniketan & Sriniketan

Deepest concern was felt in the asrama on account of the ordeal of fast which Gandhiji had taken upon himself. All normal work was suspended for the day on Thursday, February 11, as soon as news reached us about the fast. A procession was taken out by the inmates of the asrama, singing one of Gurudev's songs appropriate to the occasion. In the afternoon a meeting was organised by the students in the Mango Grove, at which several of Gurudev's national songs were sung and significant passages were read out from his book, entitled *Mahatmaji and the Depressed Humanity*, written during the historic fast, undertaken by Gandhiji in 1932 when he was confined in Yeravda Central Prison. Later in the evening the whole asrama congregated in the Mandir and offered prayers that Mahatmaji's life may be spared.

A special service for the same purpose was also held in the Mandir in the evening of the 21st.

...

Rathindranath Tagore issued the following statement to the Press on 20.2.43 :—

"For the last few days we have all been waiting in suspense, hoping every moment that the Government will at last find it possible to release Mahatmaji unconditionally. But the path of officialism is cruelly tortuous and it may be too late before those concerned awakened themselves to their sense of responsibility. In the meantime, all of us, who love and revere Gandhiji, must hope and pray that he may come out successful from this penance of fast to lead us in the path of

Truth and Non-violence. In this hour of gravest crisis we can ill afford to lose a life which epitomizes the destiny of our country and our people and in whom all our best hopes and aspirations are centred. If my father were alive today his powerful voice would have reverberated all over the world in a mighty appeal to move the conscience of mankind. We have not his voice but may we not appeal to our masters to temper their political expediency with higher human considerations!" ...

Copies of telegrams dated 20. 2. 43. sent by Rathindranath Tagore :

To Mahatma Gandhi,

"Whole asrama prays for your life."

To C. Rajagopalachariar, Birla House, Delhi.

"Praying for the success of your endeavours.

On this issue India speaks with one voice.

We cannot, must not, lose Mahatmaji."

...

Rathindranath Tagore and Protima Devi, accompanied by Kshitish Roy, left for Poona on February 22. The following telegram was received by the Sachiva on March 2 :—

"Had interview. Mahatmaji sends blessings to asrama. Returning after fast is over.

Rathindranath."

...

The Silpa-Bhavana authorities have decided to bring out a series of books on technical subjects with reference specially to cottage industries and artistic handicrafts. The first publication of the series is entitled *Batik & How It Is Made* and has been compiled by Sm. Haimanti Chakravarty.

The book contains much useful information, based on authoritative works, and will be found interesting to all those who want to know something of Batik-work.

...

We would like to draw the attention of our readers to the following two pamphlets, brought out under the auspices of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society—India Centre : (i) *India's Contribution to Chinese Culture and Chinese Studies in India* and (ii) *My Dedication to Gurud-va*. Both of them are by Prof. Tan Yun-Shan, Director, Cheena-Bhavana, and are priced at four annas each.

...

We regret that owing to inadvertence there were some mistakes in the list of the successful candidates of the Loka-Siksha Samsad examinations which appeared in a previous issue of the *News*. The following candidates, who appeared in Madhya examination (1349 B. S.), passed only in the subjects mentioned against their names :

Jagannath Bhattacharya—Literature, Sitansusekhar Ponda—Literature ; Bhupaticharan Pakhira—Literature ; and Monoranjana Bhattacharya—History.

The following names are to be included in the list of successful candidates who appeared at the Provesika examination (1349 B. S.)

Nisikanta Mascharak in I Division, and Jagadindra Chattopadhyaya, Mahadevchandra Mandal, Sudhiranjan Sen Gupta and Sachindra Kumar Mukhopadhyaya in II Division.

...

In view of the increased cost of living,

the Samsad is planning to give effect to a revised grade system with effect from January 1943 for the employees of the Visva-Bharati at Santiniketan and Sriniketan. The scheme, it is understood, will require detailed scrutiny and careful consideration. In the meantime an ad interim arrangement has been made to grant Special Allowance to the members of the staff in anticipation of the scheme. It is hoped that the Special Allowance will be of some help during these difficult days.

...

Although official confirmation is lacking, we are given to understand that the Bengal Government, in their department of Public Health and Local Self-Government, have sanctioned a Water-Supply Scheme for our asrama at a total cost of 2½ lakhs of rupees. The Government, it is gathered, will contribute 1½ lakh and the balance of one lakh will have to be met out of the Visva-Bharati Funds. The Visva-Bharati will also be charged with the maintenance and management of the Water-Works when it begins to operate. A lakh of rupees is too big a sum to spare from our already slender resources ; but considering the urgency and importance of the work we shall have to provide the money, somehow or other.

...

We would like to draw the notice of our readers to *The Call of the Himalayas* by Ramendranath Chakravarty, an ex-student of the Kala-Bhavana. The book is printed throughout on costly art paper and contains several excellent reproductions of wood cuts, illustrative of typical scenes of our asrama and of the Himalayas. There is a brief

introduction where the artist tells us of his journey from Santiniketan to Badrinath.

...

The following is a complete list of Members of the Visva-Bharati Samsad for the year 1943 :

Abanindranath Tagore (Acharya), Deben-dra Mohan Bose (Artha-Sachiva), Rathindra-nath Tagore (Karma-Sachiva), Kshitimohan Sen, Mrs. D. M. Bose, Mrs. S. N. Roy, R. Ahmed, Kalidas Nag, Sukumar Chatterji, Charu Chandra Bhattacharya, Hiran Kumar Sanyal, B. K. Guha, Miss M. Sykes, Vidhushekhar Bhattacharya, Apurva Kumar Chanda, Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, Amiya Chandra Chakravarty, Humayun Kabir, Surendranath Kar, Pramodaranjan Ghosh, Sailesh Chandra Chakravarty, Anil Kumar Chanda, Nandalal Bose, Krishna R. Kripalani, Adhir Chandra Banerjee, Tarak Chandra Dhar, Sudhiranjan Das, Sudhir Kumar Lahiri, Bhagirath Kanodia, Protima Devi, Shyamaprasad Mukherjee, Bimal Chandra Sinha, Tan Yun-Shan.

...

The third and fourth exhibitions of Acharya Abanindranath Tagore's original paintings were arranged in the Kala-Bhavana. They proved to be a unique opportunity both to artists and art-lovers.

...

We congratulate Pandit Romesh Chakra-varty, Adhyapaka, Patha-Bhavana, for having been awarded the Ram Rakshi Gold Medal (First Medal) for 1942 by the Calcutta University for his thesis on the Theory of Rebirth in Indian Philosophy.

...

We wish to convey our thanks to S. G. B. Sarkar for the gift of a set of educational

books and pictures which he has made to the Patha-Bhavana.

...

We wish to extend our hearty welcome to the following adhyapakas who have joined recently : Malina Devi and Hirendranath Datta in the Patha-Bhavana ; Preeti Gupta as Paridarsika, Sree-Bhavana ; Behari Singh as teacher of Manipuri dancing in the Sangit-Bhavana.

...

Our Granthana-Vibhaga will be hard hit as a result of the restrictions imposed on the consumption of paper. The scheme of bringing out serially the complete works of Gurudeva, under the title of *Rabindra-Rachanavali*, found favour with many lovers of Gurudeva's literature. We were freely congratulated by many who described our enterprise as 'one of national importance'. It will be extremely unfortunate if, after having brought out fifteen separate volumes under the *Rachanavali* series, we are compelled to give up this good work. We had also hoped to issue a series of books under the name of *Visva-Vidya Samgraha*, with a view to fostering adult education, and a second series under the name of *Rabindra-Parichaya*, bearing on the life and work of Gurudeva. It seems we may have to postpone indefinitely such publication of obvious value. We have already approached the authorities concerned to sanction an increase in our quota and we are now awaiting their decision with much interest.

...

Sports

In spite of the cold morning on February 9, the embankments of Bhuban-Sagar were thronged by the Asramites to cheer the swimmers. 14 junior boys plunged into the chilling waters for the 100 yard event. 12 senior boys contested for the second event ; while 9 girls competed in the third for 75 yards. Following were the winners :

Boys Junior :

1. Dilip Bose
2. Anupranjan Ghosh
3. Sunil Dey
4. Ashim Roy

Girls Junior :

1. Kanakrani
2. Pushpa Maity

Boys Senior :

1. Pranesh Bhowmik
2. Ajoy Choudhury
3. Santi Bose
4. Anil Kanta.

Girls Senior :

1. Seba Maity
2. Pushpa Terway
3. Preeti Pande

The same afternoon Acharya gave away Gurudev's books as prizes to the champions and runners-up of the Annual Sports.

The final match of Bireswar Memorial Cup Volley-Ball Tournament was played on February 21 between Staff A and College A teams. It was a keen contest and the staff defeated the holders of the cup by 3 : 1 games. The Karma-Sachiva presented the cup to the winners. Refreshments were served to all the seven teams that contested.

An interesting Hockey match was played on February 20 between the teams of Patha-Bhavana and Suri District School. It was a fast up and-down game and ended in a draw. The returned match was played at

Suri on the 24th in which Patha-Bhavana team was unlucky to be defeated by two-to-nil goals. However, the party thoroughly enjoyed their excursion to Bakheswar.

...

A Badminton Tournament for the students of the Patha-Bhavana was conducted some time ago under the guidance of Adhyapaka Jyotirinooy Nandy. The names of the winners and runners-up are given below :—

Winner	Runner-up	Group.
Gajendra Singh	Tapendra Neogy	Boys Senior
Mihir Gupta	Ranendra Datta	Boys Junior
Ruby Chaliha	Maya Ghose	Girls Singles
Devajyoti Pradhan	Bilas Pal	Sisu Singles
Maya Ghose	Arati Chaliha	Mixed
Gajendra Singh	Chandranath Choudhuri	Doubles.

Gajendra Singh, the Boys' Senior Champion, was awarded the Dhruva Memorial Cup ; and a Challenge Cup was awarded to Ruby Chaliha who won the Senior Girls' event.

Alumni News

We are glad to report the marriage of Pushpa Tonk (ex Siksha-Bhavana) to Dewan Mahindra Nath on February 7 at Rawalpindi. We wish the couple every happiness in life.

...

We congratulate Sukritirani Devi, B. A. (ex Siksha-Bhavana) on her appointment as Matron of the Orphanage Relief Centre, at Sriniketan. The Relief Centre is now ready for occupation.

...

Erratum : It should be noted that Tapan Mohan Chatterji was elected President of the Asramika Sangha at its last annual meeting and not Sudhيرانjan Das.

...

Working of Rural Medical Insurance Scheme in the Villages Surrounding Sriniketan

By Santipriya Bose

Ever since the work of rural reconstruction was taken up by Sriniketan it was realised by the workers that unless the health of the rural population was improved no improvement of the villages was possible. They found that the village people suffered greatly from malaria and other preventible diseases but they were helpless and could do nothing to ameliorate their condition. There was hardly any provision for medical aid in rural areas. The District Board charitable dispensaries were too few and these were situated either in small towns or big villages. The majority of the people living in distant villages could take no advantage of these. As for doctors, their number was found to be hopelessly small. They usually settle down in towns where, naturally enough, people are comparatively well-to-do and can pay well. The rural people are left to the mercy of quacks.

Sriniketan had to face this problem. The solution which was apparently easy was to make an extension of the existing system by setting up a large number of charitable dispensaries in the area which was selected for intensive rural reconstruction. A few qualified doctors could be appointed and small dispensaries could be set up in the interior. That seemed a good plan. But it had its serious drawbacks. It is quite possible to solve the problem of medical relief of a small area, if necessary funds can be raised by donation or Government grant. The people will receive free medical aid and will no doubt be benefited. But in actual fact this solution is unsatisfactory for the simple reason that the scheme cannot be extended over a large area. The cost of setting up similar dispensaries with qualified doctors all over the province will be prohibitive. So any scheme that Sriniketan might introduce must be of such a nature that it can be introduced elsewhere. Otherwise the experiment loses its value.

In the beginning a dispensary was set up entirely at the expense of Sriniketan and a qualified doctor was provided for an area surrounding Benuri village. The result was very disappointing. The villagers came to think that they could expect medical help from us by right. They were not to do anything in helping themselves. It was after this that the decision was arrived at of starting co-operative health unions in the villages which would be organised and managed by the villagers themselves.

In 1930 the late Kalimohan Ghose who was then in charge of rural welfare work was deputed to visit some European countries for the purpose of studying the working of medical insurance schemes. He found that the health co-operatives started by Dr. Gavrillo Kojick in Yugoslavia could with modifications be introduced in our rural areas. After his return from Europe, with the help of the medical officer Dr. J. Chakravarty,

he drew up a plan. Some spade work had already been done in the villages in the sense that a contact had been established between the village workers and the people. So when the proposal was made of starting the scheme there was an immediate response. Three health centres were started in the villages of Ballavpur, Bandhgora and Goalpara. Within a very short time these co-operatives became almost self-supporting and very little help was required from Sriniketan. This work soon won recognition and in 1935 Government made a grant of Rs. 11,000/- for starting 5 more societies at Bahiri, Adityapur, Langulia, Ilambazar and Adirepara. Two more societies were subsequently organised from the money that was left over from the District Famine Fund. In the present year it is proposed to start one society in Sitalpur which is about 6 miles from Sriniketan. The society will cover 11 villages having 249 families. Next year another society will be organised in Kasba area. These societies will not be entirely self-supporting but will have to be helped by Sriniketan.

The scheme is quite simple. About 200—250 persons join together to form the society. Each pays an annual subscription of Rs. 4/- either in cash or in kind, usually paddy. The society employs a doctor who has passed out of a medical school and possesses a diploma of the State Medical Faculty. The society sets up a dispensary either in its own house or in some house lent by some gentleman of the village. Each member, including his family, receives medical advice free at the dispensary, but has to pay a fee of annas -/4/- if he calls the doctor to his residence. The medicine is sold to members at cost price and to non-members at the normal market rate. The members get the full advantage of the clinical laboratory at Sriniketan and in difficult cases the Medical Officer of Sriniketan can be called in for consultation at a nominal fee of annas -/4/-. For treatment non-members are charged fees which they would have to pay any doctor of such qualification. There are many poor people whose indigent circumstances do not permit them to spare even the small sum of Rs. 4/- in a year. They can become members by contributing labour worth Rs. 4/- in sanitary work undertaken by the society. It should be stated here that apart from Medical relief the society also undertakes to improve the sanitary condition of the village by anti-malaria work, improvement of drains, cutting down jungles, etc. The income of each society comes to about Rs. 1,000/- from membership fees and call fees. This amount is sufficient for paying the doctor, the compounder and for meeting sundry expenses. The cost of medicine is covered by the income received from sale of medicine.

The work of organising and running the health co-operatives has been continued for a period of ten years and we have accumulated considerable experience which will be of much value in any future scheme of health improvement work. In some areas the experiment has been crowned with success, in other areas great difficulties had to be faced. For instance, the Bolpur—Bandhgora society is now entirely self-supporting with its own building. A reserve fund has been built up and more people apply for membership than can be taken in. On the other hand, there are societies in which the members are apathetic and have to be persuaded to join.

The reasons for achieving more success in some areas than in others are varied. The chief bar to success has been the economic condition of the rural population. As is well known, the income per family in our villages is so low for the majority that they are unable to pay a sum of Rs. 4/- for medical insurance. An analysis of the economic classes obtained in a village will perhaps make the point clear. In each village there is a small group of rich people who are either money-lenders or landlords. They own a great portion of the land of the village. Then there is the peasant class. They own small areas of land which they cultivate themselves. Economic condition of this group is not such that all of them can afford to become members. Those who have over 15 bighas of land may be expected to join the co-operative but there are not many peasants who have so much land. The small cultivators are too poor. At the bottom there is the large but unfortunate class of landless labourers. They work on other peoples' land on Bhag system or work as farm labourers. Their economic condition is so bad that they cannot pay the annual fee. Wealth produced in the villages is very unequally distributed. A co-operative society can only succeed where the members have similar economic status. But in the villages some are too poor and some too rich.

The large majority of the rural people depend on agriculture for their living and in a district like Birbhum, where paddy is the principal crop and where it entirely depends on rainfall, the economic condition of the cultivators solely depends on favourable rains. Frequently the crops fail. This year a fungus attack in a severe form has destroyed a good portion of the rice crop. The potato crop has also been similarly damaged. The members' income has thus been substantially affected and they are finding it difficult to pay up. In such years the membership falls and in a good year it rises again. But bad years are frequent and unless a society is helped in a bad year it breaks down. Not only is agriculture uncertain but land is poor. The villages are scattered. The population is not concentrated, with the result that sufficient number of persons who are willing to become members cannot be found in an area which can be covered by one doctor. In Birbhum there are 558 persons per square mile while in Mymensingh there are 825, Dacca 1,265, Faridpur 1,003 and Tippera 1,197 persons. Naturally this is a difficulty which a similar society organised in East Bengal would not have to face. Our Society at Adityapur had to contend with this. During the rains the doctor found it difficult to visit all the members as the roads were bad and houses situated far away. The same difficulty cropped up with the Surul-Benury Society in which the two villages are far apart. It has been now decided to separate the two units and run them as separate organisations.

While it would be quite correct to say that the low income of the rural people, coupled with an uneven distribution of wealth, presents the most formidable obstacle to the success of health co-operatives, there are other minor factors which cannot be ignored. It is difficult, for instance, for the uneducated people to grasp the ideas underlying the principle of co operation. Many members who have had no illness have been heard to complain that they were paying the membership fee for nothing. It is not easy to convince them that

they were fortunate in escaping disease and in case they fell ill medical aid would be available. It is important that the doctor who is appointed should have a rural outlook and be genuinely interested in the welfare of the society.

Although some of the societies met with more success than others, we may say that the experiment has been a success on the whole. This district is very poor and the level of income is lower than in other districts where natural conditions are more favourable. Moreover, the population is scattered. If in spite of such handicaps societies can be organised and run, it stands to reason that in other districts it will be comparatively easy to organise entirely self-supporting health co-operatives.

The Institute of Rural Reconstruction at Sriniketan should be looked upon as the laboratory where experiments at reconstruction of villages are being carried on. The experiment of medical insurance should be considered as one such experiment. Its purpose is not so much the solution of a problem, in this instance the problem of health, as to find out how a problem can be tackled. Sooner or later the State or the people will perhaps want to know how we could improve the health of our vast rural population. Then, instead of groping in the dark, we shall be ready to show the way. In this light the work that has already been done and is still being done should be judged.



Sriniketan Anniversary

By Sunil Sarkar

Sriniketan celebrated its twenty-first anniversary on the 6th February and the Mela and Exhibition organised as usual on that occasion lasted for three days. Crowded as these days were with meetings and conferences, they also offered ample opportunities for recreation, readily availed of by the inmates of Sriniketan and Santiniketan as well as by village people who poured in great numbers from far and near.

THE CEREMONY

The chief ceremony took place on the first day at 10 a. m. A beautiful bamboo gate decorated with straw and inverted pitchers had been set up by students near the entrance. The Hon'ble Mr. Pramathanath Banerjee, Revenue Minister, Bengal, accompanied by his son, and Mr. and Mrs. B. R. Sen, arrived by the morning train.

As usual, the ceremony began with the singing of some of Gurudev's songs and the recital of appropriate vedic hymns by Kshitimohan Sen, after which Charu Chandra Bhattacharya read out selections from Tagore's addresses on similar occasions compiled and printed in a booklet. We quote below a few :

"You remain as an encumbrance on the resources of the whole country only because you have been incapable of self-expression. . . . Unless you wake up, you will continue to be a dead weight upon the bosom of India. . . . A day will come when you will rise to save the country ; we are here merely to pave the way to that. I request you to come and join in our enterprise not as mere passive recipients of favour, but as our fellow-workers, as active supporters of the common cause."

"We are mere aliens in our own land. The mere fact of birth in a country does not make the country one's own. We must get to know her and win her for ourselves by our own efforts. I would ask persons who come here to help in rural work to avoid, while making provision for rural education, the error of taking it for granted that the needs of these people, mere villagers that they are, are meagre and that any niggardly sort of arrangement would suffice to satisfy them. May we never have the arrogance to assume such an attitude of disrespect towards the villagers."

"It was my fond desire to help in inundating the dried-up soil of the rural mind with the overflowing joy of creative occupations, thus opening up the avenues of its self-expression on all sides. Such creative work by village people should not merely aim at prosperity, it should aim at self-realisation."

"It should be borne in mind that truth has a value, a power of its own, which does not depend on mere quantity of work or the extent of its application. If we discover a truth in relation to our work in a small corner of the country, we discover a truth for the whole of India."

Acharya Abanindranath spoke next. He expressed his joy at what he saw at Sriniketan—"the efflorescence of the young tree that had been planted here by Rabindranath over twenty years ago." He recalled the times when all the leaders of the country, drunk with excitement, were agitating for political rights. The Poet, however, was not with them. He was then wandering in rural areas seeking first-hand acquaintance with the desperate problems that harrowed the people.

In explaining the significance of Sriniketan, the Acharya said, "The soil holds the key to the mystery of life. Whenever life loses its touch with the soil, it faces disaster." He reminded Sriniketan workers of Gurudev's repeated warning that village work was one of those noble pursuits which require whole-hearted devotion and sadhana. In conclusion he thanked the Hon'ble Mr. P. N. Banerjee, for his visit and added, "Time was when administration was in the hands of true servants of the country. The responsibility of restoring that happy state of affairs is now yours."

In the course of his address, the Hon'ble Mr. P. N. Banerjee paid his tribute of love and adoration to the Poet and said :

"For a long time I have heard from afar of the silent work being done here at Sriniketan. I am grateful today for the opportunity of witnessing it for myself. Is there any man in the country so lacking in imagination as to fail to regard this work with the deepest respect? . . . His probing insight into Indian history made it apparent to Tagore that the welfare of the country did not depend so much on the improvement of the Government or of political conditions as on the improvement of the life of the individual ; that in India the ruling power was so far detached from the life of the country that the latter was very little affected by any rise or fall of the former ; that the real life of the nation always centred round the village communities and not the big towns. When an influx of new life came with the Swadeshi Movement, Tagore offered his scheme of 'Swadeshi Samaj', that is community life fashioned on a big scale after rural ideals for the reconstruction of Bengal. . . . Approbation this proposal had in abundance but little active support. It was then that the Poet took up the great task single-handed. If his journey led him into the inner citadel of the charms of rural Bengal, it also revealed to him her worst problems. And it was to solve these problems that he established Sriniketan.

"I am a mere part of the Government machinery. I do not know how far I shall be able to help you. The example of the great foreigner (Mr. L. K. Elmhirst), who has been mainly responsible for financing this work, should open the eyes of our countrymen and of the Government. The main difference between Sriniketan and similar Government organisations appears to me to consist in the human touch, the direct contact, that plays such an important part here but is sadly missing in Government organisations which are to that extent unreal.

"This Mela, where all people meet, where the heart-beat of the nation can yet be felt, is something of national importance. In it we may perhaps find a fit memorial of Rabindranath.

"Lastly, I fully realise the heavy burden that has fallen on you who have undertaken to carry out the plan of the Poet. Indifferent though the country may appear to this heroic attempt, I can assure you that there are many among our countrymen who are watching with great eagerness and hope the progress of your work here."

A lamp was then lighted by the President on an earthen platform decorated with *alpana* by Nandalal Bose and his students, while a song of Gurudev's invoking fire was sung. Then the exhibition was formally opened by Mrs. B. R. Sen.

THE EXHIBITION

On the southern side of the Mela ground the stalls were arranged in a semi-circle, facing the Main Building, the other sides being lined with shops of all kinds. Shops were a little less in number than in the previous year, owing to the present economic condition, but confectionery shops still outnumbered all other kinds and the Chhatra Sangha tea-stall made quite a handsome profit out of its sales conducted on strict business principles.

Three of the stalls, namely, Rice Research, Live Stock and Sanitation, were organised by external agencies. The rest represented the different departments of Sriniketan, viz. Agriculture, Education, Shilpa-Bhavana and rural industries, Brati balak, Women's Welfare and Maternity. A modern village in miniature executed on ground in front of the Education Stall by Charcha students was a new feature this year. Among the various exhibits that attracted most notice were a toyship of wood and metal, correct to the minutest detail, executed by S. Rathindranath Tagore, masks made by Satra students and some toys and collections by Brati-balakas. The central stall, a cottage artistically fashioned under Nandalal Bose's direction and containing some of his collections of artistic handiwork was also a centre of lively interest.

CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

On the second day, at 4 p. m. the annual conference of the Rural Reconstruction and Health Societies sat, with the Acharya in the chair. Several resolutions were moved and carried, among which that of stopping the unrestricted transport of local produce to other places may be mentioned. The Chairman of the District Board who was present gave an assurance that steps would be taken to that end. Prizes were given for the best industrial and agricultural exhibits sent to the Exhibition by village people.

On Monday, the third day, there were two meetings, one under the auspices of the Women's Welfare Board presided over by Sreejukta Uma Debi, the other a students' function, their annual meeting and re-union with ex-students at which Prabodh Sen presided. Both were very lively and successful functions. In the Women's Conference, prizes were given for the Baby Show held in the Mela ground earlier in the day and for village women's handiwork as exhibited in the Women's Stall. The local Girls' School also utilised this occasion to celebrate its annual prize distribution and the small girls entertained the gathering with songs and recitations.

AMUSEMENTS

The Brati-Balak rally on the first day was as entertaining as in previous years and was largely attended by distinguished visitors including the Minister. The Circus and Magic parties that had pitched their tents in one corner of the ground drew large numbers of visitors. Santal dances were as popular as ever. And to make the banishment of any lingering vestiges of somnolence complete, the actors of the Jatra parties, who gave shows on all the three nights, shouted and ranted away vigorously.

It was a pity indeed that the Jatra performance of one of the Acharya's folk dramas could not be produced on this occasion as contemplated. A grand opportunity was thus missed by Sriniketan of carrying out a chief feature of its regular programme—that of feeding the rural mind with wholesome and recreative experiences. The camp-fire organised by the students on the first evening, however, may be regarded as a contribution to popular entertainment.



ABANINDRANATH TAGORE NUMBER

VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

CONTRIBUTORS

The Marquess of Zetland ; Laurence Binyon ; Sir William Rothenstein ; Nicholas Roerich ; Mohitlal Mazumdar ; Nandalal Bose ; Ramananda Chatterjee ; O. C. Gangoly ; Stella Kramrisch ; Jaminiprakash Gangoly ; James H. Cousins ; Asitkumar Haldar ; Mukulchandra Dey ; Andre Karpeles ; Biresvar Sen ; Benodebihari Mukherjee ; Mohonlal Ganguly ; Gurdial Mallik ; Kanti Ghosh ; and Abanindranath Tagore.

LIST OF PLATES—SEVERAL IN COLOUR

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OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

Abanindranath in 1897 : Pencil Drawing By Jyotirindranath Tagore.
Portrait of Abanindranath : Charcoal Sketch By Juel Madsen.
Abanindranath : Dry-point By Mukul Dey.
Abanindranath Tagore as Srutibhushan in the *Cycle of Spring*.
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VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Number X

C. F. Andrews and Santiniketan.

G. M.

In the course of his sermon which he preached at the memorial service, that was conducted for the purpose of offering congregational prayers for the peace of the soul of Charles Andrews that departed this earth on April 5, 1940, Gurudeva observed that it must have been some sort of spiritual kinship which had drawn magnet-wise Charlie to him and to Santiniketan. Since then I have pondered, more than once, on this and felt increasingly convinced that friendships like that of Gurudeva and the Dinabandhu are verily founded in heaven.—far away from, and above, the sordid dust of self-interest, howsoever the latter might be camouflaged under the high-sounding name of aspiration or avocation. I have no doubt in my mind that a large number of dwellers in the radiant Republic of Love are twins-in-the-spirit.

What does this affinity of altruistic affection, however, mean in our daily life? It is dedication on the part of each to an aspect of Truth, which is eternal as well as universal, or, as Gurudeva often used to remind us in the vibrant words of the Wise Men of old, to the trinity of Truth : *Santam*, *Sivam*, *Advaitam*—the Serene, the Good and the One.

For, it is such values that have in them, like the earth and the sky, neither the conflict of caste nor the clash of colour. They “belong” (if at all there could be any sense of possession in spiritual truth) to all and to every one.

And it was only when Charles Andrews walked out of the Church and Gurudeva went away from the threshold of the temple that they met each other on the open road. It was then that each could say to his God as well as to the other :—“Let only that little be left of me whereby I may name thee my all.”

The truth is that any relationship of love, which wishes to rest on a rock so that the waves of worldliness may not wash it away, must make God its medium, or, as a mystic would say, its mid-wife. For, then, alone the best in each salutes the best in the other, thereby revealing *Santam*, *Sivam*, *Advaitam*.

And it is this truth which is hidden in the heart of Santiniketan,—the seed sown under the *Uchatim* tree nearly three-quarters of a century ago. The *sal* avenue and “Udichi” sing it to us in the silence of the mid-night and in the melody of the morning bird. The Irish poet, A. E., who had so much in common with our Gurudeva in the versatility of genius and in the variety of its expressions, has captured this truth in words of haunting beauty :—

“No blazoned banner we unfold —
One charge alone we give to youth,
Against the sceptred myth to hold
The golden heresy of truth.”

Santiniketan and Sriniketan

Rathindranath Tagore and Protima Devi who had been to Poona to be near Mahatmaji during his ordeal of fast returned to the asrama on March 7. On the following day at an informal gathering of the Adhyapakas Rathindranath Tagore gave a short account of his own experiences in Poona.

...

The twenty-eighth anniversary of the Gandhi Day was duly kept by the asrama on March 10. The servants were given their usual holiday and students and staff-members volunteered for a variety of tasks among which cleaning of the utensils and flushing the drains featured prominently. These arduous tasks were carried on with cheerful enthusiasm.

...

Some years ago I heard an urban friend say that in his experience he had never come across any place where seasons were so distinctive as in our asrama. 'They are so well-marked', he said, 'it almost seems as if the different seasons have personalities of their own, their own peculiarities and oddities'. Asked to explain what exactly he meant my friend hummed and hawed and excused himself for having waxed poetical at a sentimental moment.

If this friend of mine were to witness the annual Vasantotsava (Spring Festival) which we celebrated on March 21 on the Dol-Purnima day he would then have found it easy to answer why the passage of seasons is so well-marked in our asrama. He would have seen how Gurudeva has taught us to harmonise our life with that of nature. We welcome the seasons with appropriate festi-

vals held in their honour with dance and music and poetry and the fact of their advent is thus felt and heard and seen in a manner most convincing. Thus it has become almost a part of our life here to greet the passing seasons and what better greeting can we extend than by singing or listening to the exquisite seasonal songs of Gurudeva ?

One of the most signal contributions of Gurudeva to our community life is the re-orientation which he has sought to give to our day to day life and the aesthetic significance with which he has tried to endow it. His spirit permeates the very atmosphere here and at no time is he nearer to us than when we sing at the sight of the beauty and wonder of the world around us.

The day of the Vasantotsava was ushered in with a song of welcome addressed to the 'prince of the seasons'. There was spring in the air when we gathered together in the Amra-kunja for the festival proper : all were decked in festive yellow. The ceremony began after a procession accompanied by dance and song terminated at the place appointed. On a raised seat in front of an area beautifully decorated by *alpoma* designs sat our Acharya. In his saffron robe he looked like the high priest of nature. After Pandit Kshitimohan Sen had chanted sonorous hymns in praise of Vasanta our Acharyadeva addressed the gathering in the following words.

'Let us all attune our spirit with that of our Gurudeva, who always joined with us, young or old, when we gathered together for a festival. Sweet and exquisite are the melodies he has taught us. Let us forthwith

harmonise our hearts with the true message of his songs. On days of joy and of sorrow he will remain with us to augment our happiness and to comfort us when our spirits droop. We are blessed in that we received the gift of his love, we are privileged in that he has entrusted us with the fulfilment of his great work.'

This was followed by songs and music and recitation and the function was brought to a close in the midst of enthusiastic scenes when everybody began exchanging the greetings of colour.

Gurudeva's dance-drama 'Chitrangada' was staged later in the evening in the library verandah and the performance was an all-round success. This is the first dance-drama to be produced since the passing away of Gurudeva and those who are responsible for getting it up and putting it on the stage deserve our best congratulations. Hasu and Seva in the title role proved that the younger generation of students are well in the way of bidding for and sharing honours with those who have previously appeared in the same role.

...

We are glad to announce that Dr. Alex Aronson, Adhyapaka in English, Siksha-Bhavana, has written a book on Gurudeva which has recently been published by Kitabistan, Allahabad, under the title 'Rabindranath through Western Eyes'.

This is an extremely interesting study analysing and evaluating the response of Western people to Gurudeva. The author has taken considerable pains in collecting his materials most of which was practically unknown before to the reading public of our country.

Dr. Amiya Chakravarty who contributes a preface to the book writes as follows:

"Rabindranath Tagore's genius, and the cultural inheritance which he mingled with western inspiration, are both stressed, especially in the fifth and sixth chapters; the poet's continental tours provide the background for a fascinating survey. While we are given an intricate pattern of European reactions, mainly from a political angle, the author scrutinises it with trained discernment. His own bias is there, both with regard to authors and to particular countries, but no effort is spared in presenting a documentary view of swift events, an enormous number of news-comments and letters are analysed and assimilated, mass enthusiasm is critically handled whenever it threatens to overwhelm judgment, and we are provided with an entirely novel perspective as we follow Rabindranath in a panoramic literary tour through Europe . . ."

...

A telegram was received here from Calcutta announcing the death of Mr. H. P. Moller of Sweden, which took place in Calcutta in March last. Mr. Moller was well-known in business circles on account of his connection with the Swedish match-manufacturing concerns in India. What is generally not known however, is that he was a true connoisseur of art. He paid a visit to the asrama a few days before his death and expressed a desire to come and settle down at Santiniketan on his retirement from business. Mr. Moller was a lifelong friend and admirer of our Acharyadeva and was formerly associated with him in promoting the cause of Oriental Art. He was also a foundation member of the Society of Oriental Art in Calcutta and a well-known collector of Indian paintings.

(Continued on page 184)

The National War Front and Rabindranath Tagore

The National War Front recently launched an offensive designed to capture the attention of the readers of Indian dailies and periodicals by storm. A large-size photograph of Rabindranath Tagore stared at us from almost every journal we took up. Is the Tagore Memorial Committee beginning to function after all?—we wondered. But the eye was immediately arrested by a caption writ in bold letters just below the photograph: “Asia for the Asiatics?” The query is astounding. Being purely rhetorical, it carries its answer in the negative. Asia is not for the Asiatics. Then for whom is Asia? For the British or for the Anglo-Americans? Could Rabindranath ever have implied such a thing? Was this the Poet’s last will and testament then? Since the National War Front propaganda is presumably directed by intelligent and honourable patriots, surely they couldn’t have intended so preposterous an interpretation. And so we are compelled to go through the rest of the advertisement, which consists, among other exhortations, of a quotation taken from the Poet’s first letter to Noguchi, in which he challenged the *Japanese interpretation* of the doctrine, “Asia for the Asiatics.” Japan cannot claim to swallow up the whole of Asia on the pretext of saving it from the non-Asiatics, for Asia belongs to all the Asiatics, and not to Japan alone. Japan has no right to invent and exploit another Monroe doctrine for Asia, even though America set the world an example. If this is all that the Poet meant, was it necessary for the National War Front to tear an allusion from its context and flash it in bold lines in a way which is likely to suggest that Asia is not for the Asiatics? Here is the full quotation from the Poet’s letter from which only a portion is reproduced in the advertisement.

“You are building your conception of an Asia which would be raised on a tower of skulls. I have, as you rightly point out, believed in the message of Asia, but I never dreamt that this message could be identified with deeds which brought exaltation to the heart of Tamer Lane at his terrible efficiency in manslaughter. When I protested against “Westernisation” in my lectures in Japan, I contrasted the rapacious Imperialism which some of the *Nations* of Europe were cultivating with the ideal of perfection preached by Buddha and Christ, with the great heritages of culture and good neighbourliness that went to the making of Asiatic and other civilizations. I felt it my duty to warn the land of the Bushido, of great art and traditions of noble heroism, that this phase of scientific savagery, which victimised Western humanity and had led their helpless masses to a moral cannibalism, was never to be imitated by a virile people who had entered upon a glorious renaissance and had every promise of a creative future before them. The doctrine of “Asia for Asia” which you enunciate in your letter, as an instrument of political blackmail, has all the virtues of the lesser Europe which I repudiate and nothing of the larger humanity that makes us one across the barriers of political labels and divisions.”

And here is another extract from the Poet's second letter to Noguchi written a month later (October 1938).

"You must forgive me if my words sound bitter. Believe me, it is sorrow and shame, not anger, that prompt me to write to you. I suffer intensely not only because the reports of Chinese suffering batter against my heart, but because I can no longer point out with pride the example of a great Japan. It is true that there are no better standards prevalent anywhere else and that the so-called civilized peoples of the West are proving equally barbarous and even less "worthy of trust." If you refer me to them, I have nothing to say. What I should have liked is to be able to refer them to you. I shall say nothing of my own people, for it is vain to boast until one has succeeded in sustaining one's principles to the end.

"I am quite conscious of the honour you do me in asking me to act as a peace-maker. Were it in any way possible for me to bring you two peoples together and see you freed from this death-struggle and pledged to the great common "work of reconstructing the new world in Asia," I would regard the sacrifice of my life in the cause a proud privilege. But I have no power save that of moral persuasion, which you have so eloquently ridiculed. You who want me to be impartial, how can you expect me to appeal to Chiang Kai-Shek to give up resisting until the aggressors have first given up their aggression?"

Such then were the sentiments of Rabindranath Tagore. He was a lover of mankind and was painfully sensitive to injustice and suffering wherever perpetrated. He it was who honoured China and carried to its shores the homage of his people when the Chinese were still regarded as "coolies" by Europeans and in parks reserved for white gentlemen in China "Chinese and dogs" were not allowed. His was the voice that was raised in protest when the British politicians (Mr. Amery among them) were not ashamed to condone the rape of Manchuria, Abyssinia, Spain, Czechoslovakia, every victim of assault and dishonour by the gentlemen-nations of Europe, found in him a fearless champion. His last great public utterance was an open condemnation of the British occupation of India and a tragic confession of the gradual loss of his faith "in the claims of the European nations to civilization." But this disillusionment caused no bitterness of spirit or hatred in his mind, nor did he ever commit the grievous error of condemning a whole people because of the acts of their politicians. He cherished to the end his respect for all that is of enduring human worth in the character and civilization of the British, the American, the French, the German, the Chinese, the Japanese, indeed of all peoples and races, and looked forward to that day when the world shall be cleansed of hatred and strife born of greed.

The above statement of the Poet's attitude is so well known as to be almost commonplace. We have repeated it here only because it suggests some relevant questions. First : Knowing, as every one knows, what the Poet thought of the invasion of one country by another, was there any doubt in any one's mind as to what he would have said of the Japanese invasion of India to make it necessary for the National War Front patriots to tear quotations from his writings and overemphasise their significance in order to persuade his

countrymen [that Rabindranath Tagore could not have welcomed a foreign invasion of his country? Second : While there is no doubt that the Poet would have condemned and resisted the invasion and occupation of India by any foreign army, would not his condemnation have included many unpleasant facts which the present advertisement conveniently ignores? Third : Knowing, as every one knows, that he did not believe in war as an instrument of righteousness, nor in hatred as a passion likely to reform the wicked, is it fair to associate his memory with propaganda, however well-intentioned, whose symbol is a naked sword pointing upwards? This is what the Poet said in his last birthday message : "From one end of the world to the other the poisonous fumes of hatred darken the atmosphere. The spirit of violence which perhaps lay dormant in the psychology of the West, has at last roused itself and desecrates the spirit of Man." If the believers in freedom, democracy and justice, as all evangelists preaching under the patronage of the Allies claim to be, associated the Poet's message with the hope that one day all the warring nations will wake to the fact that the cause of war is not the absolute wickedness of this race or that but lies in the demon of greed that has taken possession of all the so-called Nations in varying degree, that would be doing justice to his memory.

We have no desire to discourage those who, inspired by honest motives and by love of their country, wish to mobilise Indian opinion and resources to defend, *by whatever means*, the soil of their country against foreign aggression. We respect their good intentions and their endeavours. But we would request them to refrain from associating the Poet's memory with this slogan or that, which, whatever their merit, do not adequately represent the basic spirit of his life's work and message.

Moreover, it should not even be necessary for their purpose. There are innumerable "leaders" in India, the mere mention of whose names almost always calls forth cheers in the houses of Parliament, whose messages, statements, interviews and clarion calls might be utilised by the National War Front, specially as the Whitehall is never tired of advertising that it is they who represent the real India that matters. Why have recourse to the words of a poet whose appeals, while he lived, were never heeded by those who have today become the saviours of this world?

K. R. KRIPALANI

Impressions of a Visitor

I shall always hold my visit to Santiniketan in grateful memory for it was here that I first came to rest in the bosom of India after being hurled across half the world, literally, in breathless flight by airplane from the United States. I find myself at home in this "Abode of Peace." Here is the same warm international fellowship, the same eager search for truth, the same practical concern for the welfare of fellowmen that is the essence of the Quaker way of life. The experiments I have seen at Sriniketan to raise the standards of living in the near-by villages have their counterparts in the work of the Society of Friends in America. We too have been experimenting in the rehabilitation of rural communities and in developing handicraft industries as a means of increasing the cash income of impoverished labouring classes. In this respect, something Rabindranath Tagore said in one of his last addresses struck my imagination. "If I can free only one or two villages from its bonds of ignorance and weakness, there will be built on a tiny scale, an ideal for the whole of India." This is the spirit in which we should all work. Let us not exhaust ourselves in deploring injustices and miseries beyond our power to remedy. Rather, let us equip ourselves, here and now, with useful skills for service to make life for others a few steps nearer to the heart's ideal.

It was my privilege while here to speak to some of the students about my experiences in the relief of children during the Civil War in Spain. It is significant that the Society of Friends found it possible to work impartially on both sides of the war at the same time. In these times, also we need to discover ways of expressing our devotion to the cause of humanity without appearing to compromise with the forces of barbarism and cruelty. My resolve to work in this spirit of goodwill has been strengthened by my stay in your midst. On my return from China I hope I may again share a few days of fellowship with you.

John F. Rich
American Friends Service Committee

March, 23, 1943

India, Woodbrooke and Horace G. Alexander

Woodbrooke has long been connected with India. I do not know precisely when this connection began, nor the first happening that led to it. But one thinks of the coming of Rabindranath Tagore and recalls that admirable picture showing two old and distinguished men seated side by side : the Indian poet and the English savant, Rendel Harris. Or again, one thinks of M. K. Gandhi's visit in the days of the Round Table Conference on India ; and, later, of Jawaharlal Nehru's stay in Horace Alexander's house. And of many other Indian visitors of prominence, and of the students from many parts of India who have lived within its community-life. And going further, of the British friends of India to whom Woodbrooke has been a home, and also a place of constructive work. C. F. Andrews, at one time a Fellow : John S. Hoyland, of Holland House, and for some time a missionary in the Central Provinces ; H. G. Wood taking part in the Madras International Missionary Conference ; and of many others, but just now very specially of Horace G. Alexander.

Horace Alexander is in India, primarily because when the sending of a group to that country from the Friends' Ambulance Unit was decided upon earlier in the year, some of us felt that no one was better equipped to lead the group, both mentally and spiritually. He accepted the call, feeling that it meant more at this time perhaps than even the important service he could render for the F. A. U. So indeed it has proved to be.

Horace Alexander's attitude to the problem of India has, in no small measure, corresponded to that of Charlie Andrews. Deeply in sympathy with India's claim to full and unrestricted freedom, and taking constant part in promoting that freedom at home and abroad as opportunity allowed, he has always retained a clear insight and a capacity to express frankly, and with thoughtful concern, his adverse opinion where he conceived judgment to be at fault. It was this frank sincerity, coupled with a wide outside knowledge of men and things western, that was the measure of Andrews' value to his two greatest friends, Tagore and Gandhi. Tagore and Andrews work now from another plane, but Horace Alexander's friends may rejoice that M. K. Gandhi has recognised this same value in him, and has claimed him as a successor in counsel to Charlie Andrews, inviting his frank criticism when he feels moved to such. This willing acceptance of concerned criticism is one of Gandhiji's most characteristic traits. That he should accept it from British friends is remarkable ; and that he should invite it from Horace Alexander is a tribute to his confidence in his sincerity and judgment. Those who know Horace will know what real service he will seek to give in response.

The India Conciliation Group and the Friends' Ambulance Unit, as well as the Friends' Peace Committee and India Committee, have all alike felt, whilst recognising that H. G. Alexander is primarily out as leader of the Ambulance Service and that his

position is a delicate one and one not to be compromised by political activities, that in these days of crisis he will do much directed to conciliatory and mediatory action. Such service has no narrow aim, but is of the type that serves the higher interests of both Government and Nationalist movement alike. Woodbrooke and its friends will, I know, agree. H. G. Alexander is in close touch with the Metropolitan of India, Dr. Foss Westcott, Andrews' close friend; he is in similar touch with the Liberal, Moslem, and other leaders. In an air-graph letter to me from Calcutta, written two days after the arrest of the Congress Working Committee, he said: "Hitherto I have felt that the most useful thing I could do was to try to get each side to understand the other better." To this end he had been writing and cabling trying to interpret Gandhi and Nehru "according to themselves" and not according to motives alleged by statesmen and journalists. And, on the other hand, putting to these Indian leaders and their colleagues with admirable candour the antagonising effect of Congress action. The internments have unfortunately stopped this latter work; but, as he says, "happy there are still men like Sapru and the Metropolitan who are determined still to explore the way of conciliation, and it is good to be in touch with them." It is, and with kindred minded at home.

The moment is a dark one. All the more will our thoughts and prayers go out to, and for, Horace Alexander and his colleagues—who stand as those *between*, and as witnesses to the more excellent way of reconciliation which will, in God's good time, win through.

CARL HEATH

(Continued from page 127)

"Moller's sudden death has come to me as a grievous blow", said Abanindranath in a statement. Far from his own people "he passed away in the country which he so deeply loved. His many friends in India will join with me in mourning his loss. I would like to convey to his relatives in Sweden my heart-felt sympathies. May his soul rest in peace."

...

We regret to announce the death of Rai Bahadur Dr. Barada Kanta Roy. For long he was associated with the Visva-Bharati as one of its members. He was a well-known Eye-Surgeon and he often offered his services to the Rural Health Department at Sriniketan where he would give free treatment to poor people of the surrounding villages suffering from eye diseases. There are many in the locality who owe their sight to him and remember Dr. Roy with gratefulness. We would like to convey our deepest sympathies to the bereaved family with whom we share the loss.

...

We are glad to know that the Chinese Educational and Cultural mission, led by Dr. Yu-Hsiu Ku, Vice-Minister of Education, will pay a visit to the asrama very soon. Such visits are extremely welcome in that they pave the way for a better understanding between the people of China and India. We accord a hearty welcome to the Mission.

...

After a lapse of many months Rathindranath Tagore heard from Leonard Elmhirst a few days ago. The following extract from his letter will be found interesting : "The

Government sent two of us and an American to tour all the Mid-East countries to look into their rural problems especially in the field of production of food crops and when I got as far as Teheran and Ahwan I felt very near and homesick for India and for a sight of you. You must be going through hard times of all kinds, mental, physical and spiritual anxieties, but there is such a solid strength in Santiniketan that I know that it will come through with flying colours. Do you or the staff realise what foundations you have all helped to lay and what an all round equipment you have offered to your students and old members of staff with which to face all the "changes and chances of this mortal life?" Neither Japanese threats nor our own lack of imagination can really dim the spark of life and ideas that your grandfather and father planted on those red uplands of Western Bengal."

...

The third anniversary of the passing away of C. F. Andrews which is observed on April 5, 1943, was this year postponed to April 12 in order to meet the wishes of the Metropolitan Bishop of India who desired to attend the memorial service and address the inmates of the asrama on his life-long friend. As the current number would be out before that date an account of the function will therefore appear in the May issue of the *V. B. News*.

...

The fifth successive exhibition of the original paintings of our Acharya, Dr. Abanindranath Tagore, was arranged in the Kala-Bhavana Museum some days ago. This exhibition is particularly interesting and inspiring in as much as it affords one a

chance of getting a view of some of the earlier master-pieces including 'Yaksha in Exile', 'The Last Journey' 'Bharat Mata' etc. in the original. The following series are also represented : 'Phalguni series' and 'Bengal Landscapes Series'. A few sketches in colour of '*Chitrangada*' performance, done recently, also feature in the present exhibition.

The Bengal Textile Institute played a friendly hockey match with the asrama team on February 27. It was an excellent game. Our team defeated the visitors by 2 goals to nil.

As in the previous years Santiniketan was declared as an examination centre by the authorities of the Calcutta University. The Intermediate examinations are just over. Altogether 53 candidates sat for their examinations at this centre.

The following books of the Granthana Vibhaga are expected to be out before Vaisakh, to synchronise with the birthday anniversary of Gurudeva : *Atmaparichaya* containing hitherto unpublished autobiographical material collected from articles and addresses of Gurudeva ; and the fourteenth and fifteenth volumes of the *Rabindra Rachanavali* series. The third volume of the *Chithipatra* series containing letters addressed by Gurudeva to Protima Devi has just been issued.

Horace Alexander and three other members of the Friends' Ambulance Unit came here on the occasion of the Spring Festival. In the present issue appears the impressions of Mr. John F. Rich a member of the Unit.

Part III of Vol. VIII of the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly* has just been published. Its contents include : "Sonar-Bangla", a poem by Rabindranath Tagore translated into English by Dr. Aniya Chakravarty ; a learned discussion of Rabindranath's idea of the Finite and the Infinite by Sj. Benoy Gopal Roy ; an article on Upanisadic Symbolism by Sj. Nalini Kanta Gupta, and one on Aldous Huxley by Sj. Madan Gopal ; reminiscences of Rabindranath as producer of his own dramas and plays by Sj. Rathindranath Tagore ; and a scholarly study of Zeb-ul-Nisa Begum and Diwan-i-Makhfi by Sj. Bikrama Jit Hasrat. Another item of interest is an English translation by Sm. Indira Devi Chaudhurani of Sj. Pramatha Chaudhuri's masterpiece 'Char Yari Katha', with an Introduction by Prof. Dhurjati Mukherjee. There are three full page photographs of Rabindranath Tagore. Many important recent publications find lengthy reviews in this issue.

The following extract from *News and People* Section of the monthly review of *The East and West Association* appearing in the January issue of *Asia and the Americas* will be found interesting to many of us who had known Miss Gretchen Green who was associated with our work at Sriniketan for some time :

"When Gretchen Green chose the title The Whole World & Co. for the book which she wrote several years ago about her experience, and for the book shop which she now has in New York, she did it because this name which she had seen over a shop door in a Chinese city seemed best to describe the multiplicity of people and

places, of every race and country, which she had come to know.

But no better phrase could be found to describe Gretchen Green herself. War has, indeed, curbed her travelling to China, India, and all about the lands of the East and West. But war has on the other hand brought the peoples of the East to her. For she has herself, though calling on her friends for help when necessary, made the welfare of the ordinary seamen of the East who reach the New York area after torpedoings and the other hazards of wartime sailing of the seas, her especial care.

These lonesome men, in a foreign country whose language is unknown to them; these poverty-stricken men, whose poor belongings have gone to the bottom of the sea, these have found a friend in Gretchen Green. She has taken parties of Chinese to Chinese restaurants, parties of Indians to Indian restaurants, for the first taste of their own food for months and longer.

Miss Green carries on many of these activities through Seaman's House, a friendly haven for these heroic and enduring seaman of the East.

The *Chaitra* number of the *Visva-Bharati Patrika* (Bengali) has duly made its appearance. It opens with a travel diary of Maharshi Debendranath Tagore kept during his tour through the hill states of Simla away back in 1937 and it makes very interesting reading for more reasons than one. Acharya Abanindranath follows up his *Abu-Mashima* series with another interesting story. Pramatha Chaudhuri's reminiscences which started last month in a fresh series are continued in this month and so is Annada Sankar Roy's *Chenashona*. There is an

article from the pen of Manomohan Ghosh on form and substance in literature. In this number, too, there appears a notation of one of the most popular songs of Gurudeva. The usual feature of *Patrabali*—letters from Gurudeva—is not lacking and the *San-chayana* section is also there.

A pleasant function was arranged at Sriniketan to celebrate the Spring Festival. It derived an added importance from the fact that it afforded the first occasion for using the newly constructed stage behind the Main Building. The Acharya, who presided, gave a talk explaining the relative significance of Work and Recreation. He drew a fascinating word-picture of a universe where the urge of work impelled men and beasts, plants and planets alike, where the dividing line between work and play had disappeared.

The programme consisted of a sequence of songs, recitation and dances, chosen from Gurudeva, and so arranged as to represent different phases of the Spring.

The April-issue of the *Visva-Bharati Patrika* (Hindi) is ready for release. It contains, *inter alia* an important monograph by Rahul Sankrityana on *Dharmakirti*, the forgotten philosopher of 600 A. D. The writer has brought to bear upon the subject revealing light from almost inaccessible sources gathered in his Tibetan itinerary. Kshitimohan Sen discusses the basis of the mystic way and offers the right approach to the mysticism of mediaeval India. Wu Shin Ling has contributed a remarkable article on the recent trend of Chinese poetry after the sounding of the war-drums. In course of this article, the

writer has presented the sharp contrast of the old and the new poetry in China, supporting his thesis by copious examples of the manifold modernist innovations. "The Humanity of Woman" by Rabindranath discusses the problems of the Indian Womanhood. Translation of Gurudeva's *Chaturanga*—a novel of psychological interest, has been resumed from the last issue. As usual, there are translations of Gurudeva's poems. Book-reviews of significant works in Hindi, English and Bengali, Editorial Notes, and a coloured plate as the frontpiece add to the interest of this issue.

...

The work of the China-Bhavana is showing steady progress. Within the last six months the number of students, scholars as well as of staff members has increased. We had to refuse admission to a number of students for want of accomodation. We shall be able to admit more students in the China-Bhavana when the construction of the two hostels is completed. At present we have altogether seven members on the staff while the number of scholars and students has gone up to thirteen. The number is undoubtedly small although it is representative of India, China, Tibet and Ceylon.

Studies and researches are being carried on especially in Buddhism as revealed through the different schools of philosophy which crystallized round the doctrines of Buddha in different countries. Some lost

Sanskrit works have been restored from Tibetan and Chinese and are now awaiting publication. Tan Yun shan, Director of the department has written several interesting as well as informative pamphlets on the subject of the cultural relationship between China and India. Some have already been issued while others are ready for the press. China-Bhavana provides for the teaching of the following languages : Sanskrit, Pali, Hindi, Bengali, Tibetan and Chinese. The extension work on the first floor has duly been completed and four large rooms, two on each side, have been added to the library hall and are now being used as seminars. Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Vidhusekhara Sastri comes on regular visits of supervision.

...

In this issue we have printed a sketch map of Santiniketan area, to give an idea to our readers as to the rapid expansion of the institution. Since the block was prepared some more buildings have been added.

Alumni News

A reception was given in order to offer congratulation to Hon'ble Justice Sudhiranjan Das on his being raised to the bench, at 1 Dr. Rajendra Road, by the Calcutta branch of the Alumni Association, on March 27.

...

SCALE: 165'-0" = 1" INCH



ABANINDRANATH TAGORE NUMBER

VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

CONTRIBUTORS

The Marquess of Zetland ; Laurence Binyon ; Sir William Rothenstein ; Nicholas Roerich ; Mohitlal Mazumdar ; Nandalal Bose ; Ramananda Chatterjee ; O. C. Ganguly ; Stella Kramrisch ; Jaminiprakash Ganguly ; James H. Cousins ; Asitkumar Haldar ; Mukulchandra Dey ; Andre Karpeles ; Biresvar Sen ; Benodebihari Mukherjee ; Mohonlal Ganguly ; Gurdial Mallik ; Kanti Ghosh ; and Abanindranath Tagore.

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OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

Abanindranath in 1897 : Pencil Drawing By Jyotirindranath Tagore.
 Portrait of Abanindranath : Charcoal Sketch By Juel Madsen.
 Abanindranath : Dry-point By Mukul Dey.
 Abanindranath Tagore as Srutibhushan in the *Cycle of Spring*.
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Editor : Rathindranath Tagore.

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VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume XI

MAY, 1943

Number XI

Santiniketan and Sriniketan

As usual we celebrated the Janmotsava of Gurudeva on the first day of the Bengali New year (April 15). The ceremony took place in the Anra-Kunja at 7.30 in the morning.

We realised anew on this occasion how Gurudeva continues to live amongst us in the spirit and how his death has but brought us nearer to him and permitted us to secure a proper perspective of his *Sadhana*.

Our Acharyadeva and Pandit Kshiti-mohan Sen addressed the inmates on the significance of the occasion and read out copious extracts from Gurudeva's writings which show him ever a believer in Eternal Life.

After the function light refreshments were served and New Year's greetings were exchanged by those present. Later in the evening a performance of Gurudeva's *Valmiki-Pratibha* was arranged in front of the Library verandah. This performance was a distinct improvement upon the last one and Santideva Ghosh in the title role gave an excellent account of himself. He was ably supported by the band of robbers led by Sisir Ghosh.

...

A recent laudable venture of the Granthana Bibhaga is the publication of a

series of books dealing with the life and works of Gurudeva. The first of this series is *Atmaparichaya* (আত্মপরিচয়) which gives in a collected form some important autobiographical writings of Gurudeva, many of which were hitherto unpublished.

Atmaparichaya contains in all six articles written during the years 1311 B. S. to 1347 B. S. and thus covers the last thirty six years of Gurudeva's life in particular. Few books give such insight into Gurudeva's mind and art as this set of self-revealing articles do. This slender volume will be indispensable as a commentary on Gurudeva's life and works and all serious students will have many an occasion to refer to its pages. The portrait-photograph of Gurudeva by Hasegawa and reproduction of a six-page letter in Gurudeva's own autograph enhance the attraction and value of the book.

...

The *Vaisakh* number of the Visva-Bharati Patrika (Bengali) which has only made its appearance, is of special interest in that all its contents have a bearing on the life and literary activities of Gurudeva—*Vaisakh* being the month in which he was born. Contributions from writers like Acharya Abanindranath, Pramatha Chowdhury, Kshiti Mohan Sen, Tan Yun-Shan,

Probodh Chandra Sen, Hemlata Devi and others enrich its pages. This particular issue is bulkier than its predecessors and it may claim to be a Gurudeva Birthday Number on a modest scale.

...

On a previous occasion we informed our readers that the Granthana-Bibhaga has formulated a comprehensive scheme to bring out a series of informative handbooks on a wide range of subjects under the name of *Knowledge of the World* (বিশ্ববিজ্ঞান সংগ্রহ) series.

We are glad to say that the first book of the series, সাহিত্যের স্বরূপ by Gurudeva has already been issued. The next book of the series কুটিরশিল্প by S. Rajshekhar Bose is expected to be out shortly.

All the books of the series are attractively got up and are of an uniform size. The price has been deliberately kept low (six annas and eight annas) in order to make these books available to a large circle of readers.

..

Mr. John Sargent, Educational Adviser to the Government of India accompanied by Dr. D. M. Sen, Asst. Educational Adviser paid a short visit to our asrama on May 1 last en route to New Delhi. It may be recalled that Mr. Sargent paid his first visit to Santiniketan four years ago on Gurudeva's invitation. It was at his recommendation that the Central Government made to Visva-Bharati an annual grant in recognition of its contribution to Indian culture. The present visit was undertaken by Mr. Sargent with the purpose of acquainting himself with the developments that had

taken place during the last four years. Although he had very little time at his disposal he went round all the various departments at Santiniketan and Sriniketan and evinced keen interest in everything he saw.

...

We are very glad to announce that the Bengal Government in their Department of Public Health, Local Self Government and Civil Defence have sanctioned a scheme for the improvement of water-supply at Santiniketan. The scheme is estimated to involve a capital outlay of Rs. 2,48,500/- and a recurring charge of Rs. 6,000/- per annum. Government have been pleased to make a capital grant of Rs. 1,50,000/- towards the cost of the scheme, the Visva-Bharati contributing the remaining amount as well as meeting the annual recurring expenditure.

According to the scheme it is sought to acquire the Bhubandanga bund in order to convert it into a storage tank together with the portion of land lying to its north serving as catchment area. Land Acquisition proceedings have already been taken in hand and we hope to be able to carry out the work soon. Needless to say this project when completed will help us to remove a long-felt want and we would like to convey our grateful thanks to all those who have been responsible for sponsoring the scheme.

...

Surendranath Kar, Sachiva, Santiniketan, who has not been keeping good health for some time now went on leave last month. During his leave period Adhyapaka Sailesh



Portrait of RALPH CORWELL
By Antonia Smith, 1909

Looking Back

Rathindranath Tagore

As a boy I used to accompany my father very often on his frequent visits to the zemindary estates. One of these visits has left a lasting impression by its association with a dramatic episode which took place while we were spending a fortnight in a houseboat on the river Gorai.

Shelidah, the village headquarters of the estate, where father spent a large portion of his youth, lies on the northern-most border of Nadia, being separated from Pabna by the river Padma, which forms the natural boundary line between the two districts. But after reaching the alluvial plains of Bengal, the Padma is no longer the dainty and well-mannered stream as it flows by the sacred cities of Allahabad and Benares. It has gathered volume during its onward course through its long journey and changed into a seething mass of muddy water, vast in extent and unruly in character. In spite of its size it has acquired a capricious nature playing hide and seek with the innumerable villages along its banks. Just when some of these villages would begin to feel secure and happy in receiving her caresses she would wantonly abandon them.

In those days Shelidah was snugly ensconced between the Padma and the Gorai and this advantageous position gave the place for many years an added importance as a river port. Boats of all descriptions would call there to unload or to replenish their cargo of paddy, jute, oilseeds, jaggery, and what not, the produce of the richest portion of Bengal. Clumsy heavy cargo-boats from Behar as well as the lightly built and finely proportioned "*panshies*" from Dacca would be there. But that which gave the most active interest to the river-life, was the fleet of fishing boats that kept busy day and night catching "hilsa", and transporting the catch to Calcutta from Kushtia, the nearest railway station.

Extensive sandbanks used to form near the confluence of the two rivers on the other side of Shelidah, and these were the favourite haunts of my father during the winter months. He would at such times abandon the house for the houseboat and try to find secluded spots remote from any habitations. Here he would be busy writing from morning till night in complete solitude. There was nothing to distract him except for the occasional flight of wild ducks and the plaintive cries of the gulls.

It was in the month of October, somewhere in the nineties, when I was barely nine years of age. Father had taken me with him on the boat and although it was too early in the season we were cruising about looking for a suitable dry sand-bank. Father was then editing the Bengali monthly "*Sadhana*", the major portion of which he had to fill with his own writings. Almost every issue would contain a short story. These were later on published in a collected form as "*Galpa-gucchha*". Most of these stories contain vivid and intimate descriptions of the day-to-day life of the common people living in the villages of

Bengal. And among such villages Shelidah has a place of its very own, because it was here that father came into the closest contact with the sons of the soil and gathered his experience of their joys and sorrows.

The whole day he would sit in the front cabin and write. My time would be spent just as quietly in the adjoining bedroom gazing with fascinated eyes from the windows at the ever-changing life on a river. After sunset father would take me up on the deck and try to entertain me as best he could. One evening, as we were sitting on chairs placed close to the railing, one of father's slippers fell into the water. Without a moment's hesitation he dived into the river and swam after it fighting with the swift currents. The rest of the evening was happily spent with the pair of salvaged slippers, now rendered quite useless, drying in front of him.

But we were not destined to enjoy this idyllic life much longer. Without warning one morning clouds darkened the sky and a cyclone began to blow. Our boat had to take refuge in a sort of bay, formed quite often by indentations of the banks and known to the fishermen as "*dah*." Into this *dah*, where neither the current nor the waves could enter through its narrow bottleneck, had crowded hundreds of river crafts. The storm raged continuously for three days. From our safe refuge we were the helpless witnesses of the cruel devastation that took place on the river and in the villages on its banks. Wreckage of every description—sinking boats, uprooted trees, roofs of houses—would be swept along the current in unending procession.

On the afternoon of the third day when the storm had somewhat abated but the waves on the river were still running high, we went up on the top deck to stretch our limbs and get a good view of the weird scene. Suddenly father cried out that there was a body being carried down the middle of the river. Looking carefully where he pointed one could see nothing but a mass of dark hair floating over the water, rising and falling with the movements of the waves.

Father immediately ordered the men to take the life-boat out to the drowning person—a woman undoubtedly. The boatmen replied it would be foolhardy to venture out in such a storm. Father got annoyed and jumped into the lifeboat himself. Still they tarried until our old Mahomedan cook abusing them that they were all cowards rushed to help father. Thoroughly ashamed now, they followed him into the boat and tried to redeem their cowardly behaviour by compelling father to remain behind while they sallied forth. It was thrilling to watch the frail little boat being rowed across the boisterous waves by the men pulling heftily for all they were worth, led by the encouraging gesticulations of the cook, who had assumed command.

In the meantime the body had been carried a long distance and it was quite dark when the rescue party returned with the woman. The cook told father a strange story. When the boat came alongside and one of the men catching hold of her hair tried to drag her in—the woman repeatedly beseeched them to let go. She was far from drowning ;

* The word comes into the name of the village Shelidah.

being an expert swimmer she found it difficult to get rid of herself that way. She would not give her name. But father soon discovered that she was the wife of one of our tenants—a remarkably handsome woman with little reason to be tired of her young life.

The husband was sent for and after father had spoken to him not only did he take his wife home but—so goes the story—never again did he give her cause to feel unhappy any more.

* The whole incident is briefly referred to in স্বাক্ষর পূর্বপত্র an article by my father which appeared in তত্ত্ববোধিনী পত্রিকা (আষাঢ়, ১৮৩৪)—Ed.



Romain Rolland on Rabindranath*

Tagore is scarcely known in France save through the solemn face of the Poet-Prophet, that imposing figure veiled in mystery, whose calm voice, harmonious gestures, and luminous brown eyes shaded by dark brows, radiate a serene majesty. When you approach him for the first time, you act involuntarily as if in a church, and speak in a subdued voice. Then, if you have the opportunity of observing from nearby this fine and noble profile, you perceive beneath the harmony and the music of the lines, sadnesses that have been overcome, a vision without illusions, a virile intelligence which firmly confronts the battles of life, yet refuses to let itself be blurred.

And you remember his ethereal poems woven of lights and shadows in which there burst forth the lightning flashes of the Vedas—from behind the veils of the eternal Soul, the mysterious traveller in his transitory flight from world to world in pursuit of the Divine Lover. And you remember the solemn prophecies hurled at the nations of the earth and pointing out Shiva's menace hanging above the triumphant civilizations in decay.

This Brahmin's voice seems to be always made like that of the great ancestors—to celebrate the ritual sacrifice on the summit of mountains, and one cannot imagine that it also speaks familiar language. When Europe thinks of the great Inspired Ones of India, she only bears in mind their seriousness, she forgets the smile that hovered on Buddha's lips whose homely railleries one finds again in the beautiful conversations of Majjhimnikayo. The gods and wise men of Asia—apart from the terrible lords of the old Testament who I think, have never laughed—all know irony. It creeps under the bark of even the most ancient and sacred texts. It is we, blockheads from the West, who fix their features in a uniformly serious solemnity. Their sacred legends laugh.

There is a story—Tagore himself relates it—of how a kid one day went and wept before Brahma, and said :—"My lord, how does it happen that I am used as food by all living beings?"—And Brahma replied :—"Alas, what can I do, my son? When I look at you I too am tempted to munch you!"

If Brahma himself jests with his creations, one is led to believe that the minor gods and sages do no less. Their religious festivals frequently overflow with a gaiety which is wholly Italian. The gods of the Himalayas, like their cousins in Greece, know the Olympian laughter. And the Indian sages enjoy the playful jokes of Maya all the more for not being its dupes. And sometimes they disconcert their candid admirers.

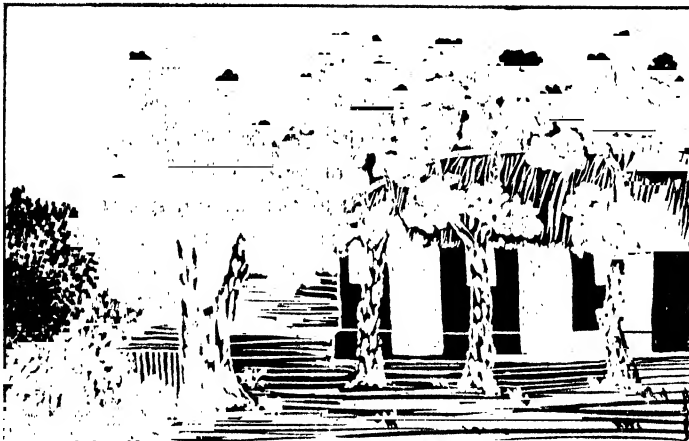
My friend C. F. Andrews who for twenty years has made India his second home, and who is one of the most intimate friends of Tagore, has told me that the first day he saw him, he felt obliged never to dispense with a solemn look and grave and weighty words in accordance with those of the Master. But the day had hardly passed before the Guru had

* The above extract has been translated from French by Dr. A. Aronson, from Romain Rolland's introduction to *Quatre Voix*—French translation of Gurudeva's *Chaturanga* by Madelein Rolland.—Ed.

played him some fanciful trick which even now, when Andrews thinks of it, makes him laugh.

Humour has never been lacking in the thinkers and poets of India. It is the natural counterweight to their meditation. And the mind of Tagore partly owes its equilibrium to it. The visionary whom we believe to be plunged in contemplation, smilingly observes the tragi-comedy of the world —(like that other visionary, the most powerful epic poet of our Europe, Carl Spittler). And nothing is lost on either of them, of the drama with its hundreds of varying scenes.

Tagore was born in a tragic age in which is being decided the destiny of humanity, and particularly, of his own multifarious people. A mission has been imposed upon him to enlighten and lead the men of his time, those who search for a passage across the flooded river. That is why words of poetic and prophetic inspiration take the foremost place in his creation, and he has attached less importance to his works of observation. Europe has taken little notice of the latter ; for while the poems and the great essays are of a universal appeal, the field of observation in his novels and short stories is naturally Indian. But that is precisely why today these works ought to attract the attention of all those who, fascinated already by the brilliant light which they see rising there, by Indian's sun—want to know the people from among whom came those living master-minds : Tagore, Aurobindo Ghose, Jagadish Chunder Bose, -- and that saint the Mahatma.



Andrews Commemoration Day

A solemn service was held in the Mandir on April 12 to commemorate Charlie Andrews. Rev. The Bishop of Calcutta addressed the congregation as follows on the occasion :

I count it a joy and privilege that I should be invited to Santiniketan to share in this commemoration of our mutual friend Charles Freer Andrews. For Santiniketan is, as its name implies, a home of peace, a place whose atmosphere and surroundings are full of rest for body and spirit. It is more also ; the genius of its founder and his world-famous son have made it an embodiment of the best of Indian culture and tradition.

Some of you in this Indian home of his will know that in several ways Andrews was intimately connected with my own family. In his student days at Cambridge my youngest brother was his greatest friend ; in study and worship they were always together, and grew together in the knowledge of God. My brother-in-law, his college tutor at Cambridge, helped Andrews to the critical decision to serve abroad rather than in England ; and the death of my brother his friend, after only four years of service in the Cambridge Mission at Delhi, constituted for him a definite call to fill the vacant place. I had a sister too who was for many years an invalid. Andrews was one of many who learned from her how God may be revealed in suffering.

A short time before Andrews went as a student to Cambridge, he had a profound religious experience. The convictions born of it governed his whole life, deepened and enriched, but not changed, by the years. From that time forward the central reality of his life was the presence of "the indwelling Christ". He knew in his own experience the truth and power of the things to which the New Testament bears witness : "I live, and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me."

Andrews' attitude as a missionary in India was governed by his belief that the God Who is Love can hold in His purposes nothing but infinite good for every child of man. It seemed to him a denial of the very nature of God to think of Him as "punishing" those from whom the circumstances of their lives withheld knowledge of Himself. Rather, "to whom much is given, of him shall much be required." True love shares its goods with the loved ones. Andrews, the missionary, shared with all those with whom he was brought into contact, the good thing which had been given to him—the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ his Lord.

Andrews believed profoundly that God by His guidance enables each individual to live his own life in accordance with the Divine Will, but on one condition, that he is obedient to the guidance which he receives. If he will not obey, the guidance is withdrawn. Perhaps this was one reason for the great love Andrews had for the Gospel of St. John, which pictures Christ as one whose meat and drink it was to do the Will of God and who recorded the promise that the Holy Spirit should guide us into all truth.

As the years went by Andrews felt the compulsion grow on him to identify himself, as his Master had done, with the poor and down-trodden. He was associated with Stokes, Weston, and Sadhu Sundar Singh, in a plan for a "brotherhood of the intimation of Jesus through poverty and lowly service. This plan came to nothing, but the example of the brilliant Dr. Schweitzer, who turned away from the highest prizes of scholarship and art to serve some of the neediest and lowliest tribes of Africa, led Andrews to leave St. Stephen's College, Delhi, to take up similar service. His first mission of this kind was in South Africa, in the cause of the indentured Indian labourers there. From that time forward he was the champion of the oppressed and down-trodden everywhere—in Fiji, in New Guinea, in Assam, in Kenya, as well as again and again in Natal. Always he took the most scrupulous pains to sift evidence and to document his case; to assure himself that all his statements in speech or writing were absolutely true. And always the mainspring of his work was the thought of Christ who said "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of these, even these least, ye have done it unto me."

One thing more in closing. In 1935 Andrews delivered a great address to the students of Cambridge. Its subject was "The Ministry of Reconciliation." Into it he put all his longing for reconciliation between men of different lands, all his conviction that this could only be achieved by human lives dedicated in the spirit of Christ to the humblest services for man. Out of that meeting were formed parties of young men, of many nations and races, who sought out needy corners of the world—in Austria, in Spain, and elsewhere—and undertook that ministry. It was an expression of the greatest concern of Charlie Andrews' heart. It was true insight that found in the initials of his own name—C. F. A.—the title "Christ's Faithful Apostle"; and never did anyone deserve more richly the lovely name with which India has honoured him, "Deena-bandhu", the friend of the poor.*

Prior to the address Pandit Kshitimohan Sen conducting the service said :

The devotee desires to identify himself with the object of his veneration. His worship and devotion are all expressive of this desire. True union between God and His devotee is attained only when their personalities fuse into each other and become one. Better union there is none.

Through the various ages saints and seers have tried to express their own idea of godhead. Among such expressions one of the most appropriate as well as ancient is the following verse in the Rig Veda : *He gives Himself.*

Thousands of years have passed but this verse remains the noblest epithet to describe the Divine.

God is God because He gives Himself. He has endowed us with all that makes us human but what is more, He has given Himself. As ordained by Him the Sun, Moon, Planets and Stars move in their course. He regulates every little thing in the world of nature, and all animate objects live and move and have their being in Him. Above

* We are indebted to Marjorie Sykes for the above summary—Ed.

everything else has He made a gift of his Divine Self. Everywhere there are signs of His unreserved dedication.

The true devotees of God therefore desire to dedicate themselves completely in the service of all. Prophets like Buddha and Christ did not bring to the world gifts of a wordly nature—they did not bestow material wealth and happiness. Nevertheless theirs was the best gift of all; for did not they give themselves? If material wealth were sufficient Buddha would not have given up his throne, neither would Christ declare how very difficult it is for the rich to enter into heaven. They sacrificed their material well-being so that they could bring to humanity the more abiding gifts of the spirit. Mahaprabhu Chaitanya was a profound scholar. He literally threw away his scholarship into the waters so that he could give himself for the good of his fellow man. Even as the Sun radiates life-giving warmth and light for the sake of all, so they also of their own accord gave out of their abundance.

It is to remember such a godly person that we have gathered together this evening. Our friend Charlie Andrews was a reputed scholar. But that was but a small part of his greatness. His nobility lay in the fact that he dedicated himself in the service of humanity irrespective of caste, creed and colour. A Britisher, he refused to be bound by the limits of British insularity. Wherever there were injustice and evil and oppression he fearlessly stood by the victims to vindicate their wrongs.

Whether in South Africa or in Fiji, in Mauritius or Zanzibar, wherever man suffered at the hands of his brother, Charlie made common cause with the poor, the downtrodden. That he identified himself with Indian aspiration was due more to this trait of sympathy and loving kindness in his character than anything else. Here in the Visva-Bharati, where the whole world finds its shelter, his spirit of love and service found its most beautiful expression. And as to the friendship that existed between Gurudeva and Andrews, it was rare on account of its warmth and understanding, its utter selflessness and identity of aims.

Though in his body he is no more, in his spirit Andrews is there wherever an endeavour is made to right a wrong, where brother loves his brother and where men fearlessly stand against injustice and oppression. His dedicated spirit is always with us, teaching us to hate evil and at the same time to love our fellow-men. He is with us because he is with God and like his heavenly father he delights in giving himself.

Visit of Chinese Educational & Cultural Mission.

Few institutions in India have had such unique privilege or opportunity of actively helping in the revival of cultural fellowship between China and India as the Visva-Bharati. Ever since 1924 when its Founder-President, the late Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, paid a visit to China there has been increasing contact between the two countries which ultimately resulted in a formation of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society of which Santiniketan is the centre in India. One of the pioneering activities of the Visva-Bharati in the above direction was the founding of the China-Bhavana, Department of Sino-Indian Studies, which was started with the help of liberal donation of funds and books from China in 1937, as an integral part of the institution.

During the last few years Santiniketan has been honoured by visits of every important delegation which has been sent out to India by China. Amongst the notable personages who have visited this place there are names that are held in the highest honour by the Chinese people. It may be recalled the only private and non-official institution which Their Excellencies The Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai Shek visited during their memorable visit to India, was Santiniketan.

It was therefore in the fitness of things that Santiniketan was included in the itinerary of the Chinese Educational and Cultural Mission which is visiting India at present. The Mission was composed of the following members : Dr. Y.H Ku, Vice-Minister of Education, Dr. T. C. Ou, Director of Higher Education, Mr. T. L. Shen, Councillor, Supreme Council of National Defence and Dr. W. T. Wu, Councillor, Supreme Council of National Defence.

Early in the morning of April 10 the Mission was met at the station by Rathindranath Tagore, General Secretary, Visva-Bharati ; Tan Yun Shan, Director, China-Bhavana and Anil K. Chanda, Private Secretary to the Acharya. The party was then escorted to Santiniketan where a public reception was arranged. On arrival at the Amra-Kunja (Mangogrove), the venue of the function, the delegates were received by the President of the Visva-Bharati, Acharya Abanindranath Tagore and by Pandit Kshitimohan Sen. They were then conducted to their respective seats overlooking a beautiful Alpana design executed by the artists of the Kala-Bhavana.

The reception was given in the traditional Indian style. The guests were garlanded and their foreheads were marked with sandal paste. The following address of welcome was then read out by Dr. Abanindranath Tagore:

Thrice welcome, O honoured and reverend guests. Welcome to the Santiniketan of our great Master and Poet, O Guests of another land. Welcome !

May the ancient trees of this ashram refresh you with their cooling shade. May ever-new waves of fragrance, diffused through the immortal Poet's garden from flowering trees and creepers, bear away all your weariness. May this welcome of the mangogroves

of Santiniketan be fulfilled to you in peace from toil. May the blessing of the Poet-master be showered on you and as alike.

Thrice welcome to you all.

Replying Dr. Y. H. Ku said: We are deeply touched by the cordial reception and the warm welcome you have extended to us. We have come to the home of the Great Poet at this international seat of learning, humbly following the footsteps of our beloved leader Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek and President Tai Chi-Tao, to renew and strengthen China's acquaintance with you and at the same time to pay homage to the spirit elevated by the Gurudeva and kept alive by all of you.

Santiniketan is the one and unique educational institution which has won the respect and admiration of all my countrymen. It is not only the "darling of your hearts" but of all those who love the freedom of the open sky and the rapture of heaven's kisses. It is here that we see the visions of the great Maharshi made true and eternal. For was it not just eighty years ago that this piece of land was purchased and hence destined to be the abode of peace? It is also here that the world-celebrated Poet-Philosopher had given his life and ideals and in turn found his heart's content and his soul's retreat. For forty long years he had cherished his dear and tender thoughts for the establishment of such a school which has an idea behind and a great inspiration in it.

We are therefore particularly pleased to see the torch of learning burning bright under the clear sky at Santiniketan. We are also very much impressed by the work of China-Bhavana under the able direction of Professor Tan Yun-Shan. It will serve us to remind the world that we have not forgotten our past heritage and that India and China are now ready to renew the historical cultural relation of two thousand years.

Our Minister of Education, Dr. Chen Li-Fu, a great admirer of Dr. Tagore and an ardent friend of Santiniketan, wishes me to bring his greetings to you. On behalf of the members of the Chinese Educational and Cultural Mission, may I thank you again, Ladies and Gentlemen, for your cordial welcome, and may I wish that the light of Asia will bring freedom and happiness to you all in the beautiful abode of celestial peace.

The ceremony was brought to a close with the singing in chorus of one of Gurudeva's songs.

In view of the short nature of their stay as well as in consideration of the heavy programme which the delegates had gone through, the Mission was given as much rest as possible during their visit to Santiniketan. Nevertheless a brief and compact programme was arranged in order to acquaint them with the activities of the various departments of Visva-Bharati. After the reception the delegates went round Santiniketan and spent a delightful hour in the Kala Bhavana Museum, where an exhibition of the paintings by Acharya Abanindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose and other artists as well as students of the department, had been arranged. After visiting the Girl's Hostel, Library and Research Department the party motored back to Uttara yan, where they stayed as guests.

In the afternoon of April 10 the Mission visited the China-Bhavana and evinced the keenest interest in the activities of the department. They spent a long time in the Library admiring the excellent collection of Chinese classical books, many of which, they said, had become rare and priceless after the systematic bombing of the Chinese seats of learning by the Japanese aggressors. A tea party was held in the premises of the China-Bhavana in honour of the eminent guests under the auspices of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society. The party provided an opportunity for the staff of the Visva-Bharati to meet the delegates in an atmosphere of friendliness and cordiality.

Rathindranath Tagore, as the General Secretary of the Indian Centre of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society, addressed the following few words of welcome to the mission:

On behalf of the India Centre of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society, I extend to you, gentlemen, a cordial welcome. It gives me great pleasure to address you,—a humble representative of an ancient nation welcoming in our midst you who are distinguished representatives of another ancient culture.

The Sino-Indian Cultural Society, as you are all aware, was founded in 1935 in Nanking, then the capital of the Chinese Republic with the blessings and personal interest of leaders of the nation like Marshal Chiang-Kai-Shek, President Tai-Chi-Tao, the late Dr. Tsai-Yuan-Pei, Dr. Chen Li-Fu and others, to establish close cultural contact between China and India. An Indian Centre was established at the same time with Santiniketan as its centre, owing to the great personal interest evinced in the whole scheme by our revered Pratisthata-Acharya, Rabindranath. This Society, I am proud to relate here, has had some positive results to its credit and we began a movement that has effected the establishment of Sino-Indian studies in several of our Universities. China and Chinese culture today loom large in our intellectual world and close contact has also been established between the governments of the two countries. Your presence here today is an indication and a visible result of that contact. The China-Bhavana, where we have assembled today is itself a great embodiment of the generosity of the great Chinese people who have helped us to erect this structure and to establish this department in the Visva-Bharati, whose ideal it is to serve as the home of all the different cultures of the world.

India has ever proclaimed the unity of mankind. She raised the banner of cosmopolitanism, undaunted in the face of all difficulties. She has accepted all cultures as her very own; she has rejected none. Our Gurudeva has been one of the noblest interpreters of this great message of India to the world. Through him, India spoke to the world that there is only one religion and that is the Religion of Man; that there is only one nation and that is the Nation of Humanity.

In conclusion, while welcoming you all once again in our midst as members of one human brotherhood, I can do no better than quote the following noble lines from an ancient sage, Manu; "That is my countryman, that one is a stranger,—so thinks the man of narrow mind and heart. The noble soul regards the whole world as kin."

Replying Dr. Ku said : We are greatly honoured by the warm welcome of the India Centre of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society. In exchanging our greetings I cannot help recollecting the blessings of our beloved Founder-President Gurudeva Rabindranath Tagore. He belongs to China as well as to India, just as the noble Hieun Tsang belonged to India as well as to China. It was Tagore who hastened China's literary renaissance. It was he who enlightened the Chinese youth to value the cultural heritage of the East. And it was he who brought to the minds of the Chinese people the inspiration as well as the aspiration of our brethren in the land of Western Heaven—India.

The people of China appreciate your deep concern in our heroic struggle against aggression during the past six years. We have indeed suffered a great deal. Families were broken up, villages were demolished. Universities and other cultural institutions were bombed, damaged or destroyed. Yet against all odds the country fought like one man under the brilliant leadership of our Generalissimo. When we were in lack of weapons, we fought with our iron will, and flesh and blood were sacrificed with devotion. We have built up new seats of learning for the training of intelligent citizens of a new generation who can lead simple and rigid lives and are ready to fight for their own country. For well we know that only through supreme sacrifice will we be able to guard our precious heritage and that only through intensive and extensive education and hard work for all will we be able to carry out Dr. Sun Yet-Sen's ideal of a modern China as well as a world of universal brotherhood.

Concluding Dr. Ku said, "Here then is a challenge to us, the peace-loving people of India and China. We who are responsible for the cultural development of one half of the world's population, must recognize our responsibility towards humanity in helping to make the world a better place to live in. We must seek closer mutual understanding with each other. It is to this noble cause that we, the members of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society, should dedicate ourselves. You have told us that your heart is one with China, may I assure you that China's heart is one with India?"

In the evening the delegates were entertained at a performance which took place in front of the Library verandah. The play to be presented was the famous dance-drama Chitrangada or Chitra. The performance was excellent in every detail and was greatly appreciated by the guests.

The following day (April 11) the Mission visited the Visva-Bharati Institute of Rural Reconstruction at Sriniketan where they showed keen interest in the artistic handicrafts and cottage industries of the Silpa-Bhavana. They also had lengthy discussion with the officers of the Institute as regards the reconstruction programme of the Visva-Bharati in so far as it concerned problems of health, education and agriculture in rural areas of India.

The party left Santiniketan in the afternoon of April 11. They were seen off at the station by some representative members of the Visva-Bharati staff.

(Continued from page 142)

Chandra Chakravarty will officiate as Santiniketan Sachiva. We wish S. Kar speedy recovery.

...

The Santiniketan Sachiva has circulated the following to the guardians of our students :—

' We deplore the necessity which compels us to increase the monthly residential fees by a further sum of Rs. 2/- with effect from July, 1943. As you are well aware the cost of food materials has been increasing every day. So far we have been meeting deficits in the kitchen from month to month in the hope that the situation will improve. But we are no longer in a position to do so. We therefore appeal to you in the interests of the Institution to co operate with us by agreeing to pay the enhanced rate we have been obliged to impose, from the beginning of the next term.

...

The scheme of revised grades of salaries for members of the staff of the Visva-Bharati at Santiniketan, Sriniketan and General Office came into force with effect from April, 1943.

The following scales of salaries have been adopted :—

Class I. 200, 200, 225-25/2-300. Selection Grade 300-10-350.

Class II. 125, 125, 150-20/2-190, 190, 200 Selection Grade 200-15/2-275.

Class III. 80, 80, 90, 100-10/2-150. Selection Grade 150-160-8/2-200.

Class IV. 50, 50, 65-5/2 100. Selection Grade 100-10/2-130.

Miscellaneous Service-25, 25, 35-5/3-80, E. R. at 40, 50 & 75.

We are glad to know that the Samsad has made a lump grant of Rs. 9,000/- in order to make rice available at comparatively cheaper rates for our members of the staff and menials at Santiniketan and Sriniketan.

...

Santipriya Bose, Economist and Statistician, Sriniketan, left last month for Calcutta on deputation. His services have been lent to the Statistical Laboratory for field and survey work in connection with the collection of certain important agricultural data.

...

We are glad to announce that Dr. Sudhir Sen, till recently Secretary to the Visva-Bharati Economic Research Board, has been appointed as an Economist in the Directorate of Civil Supplies, Bengal. His book entitled *Tagore on Rural Reconstruction* is shortly to be published by our Granthana Bibhaga.

...

Varsha-Sesh and Nava-Varsha Mandir Services were conducted this year by Pandit Kshitimohan Sen.

...

We are glad to know that S. Jnanendralal Majumdar, a life member of the Visva-Bharati, has kindly arranged to donate every year a medal in memory of his daughter, Kumari Aparajita. The medal will be awarded to a student (boy or girl) of the Patha-Bhavana passing the Matriculation Examination and securing the highest marks for the school, not less than the minimum first division marks, in Sanskrit.

...

Some recent paintings by Manindra Bhusan Gupta, an ex-student of the Kala-

Bhavana, were exhibited in the Havell Hall just before the Institution broke up for the summer holidays.

A night school has been started at Sriniketan for the benefit of apprentices attached to the Silpa-Bhavana. Prabhatmohan Banerji of the Loka-Siksha Samsad who has taken an initiative in the matter, is confident of excellent results.

Oncoming holidays always provide an incentive for play-acting as may be seen from the fact that two dramas were staged at Sriniketan just before the summer vacation started. The Karmin-Sangha produced *Vaikunther Khata* and local students followed suit with *Birinchi Baba*. Light dramas lightly rendered are excellent for bringing about a spirit of holiday gaiety. We congratulate the participants.

The most recent addition to the series of Loka-Siksha books is a Short History of Bengali Literature (বাংলা সাহিত্যের কথা) by Adhyapaka Netai Binode Goswami. Within the compass of a little more than hundred pages the author has eminently succeeded in tracing the history of the origin and development of Bengali Literature. The book is written in a style which makes it interesting and profitable reading for scholars and lay readers alike. One added interest attaching to the book are passages from his own pen which Gurudeva incorporated when he went through and revised the Mss. of the book.

A condolence meeting was held in the afternoon of April 10 to mourn the death of Begam Azad. Marjorie Sykes who presided paid a warm tribute to the heroic spirit of the consort of the Congress President and prayed for the peace of her soul.

Santiniketan and Sriniketan

The twenty-fifth day of Vaisakh, being the eighty-second anniversary of Gurudeva's birthday, was duly observed and celebrated by the asrama.

The day began with a *Vaitalika* song in the early hours. Immediately the choral party started singing there was a smart shower, the very first of its kind after many trying days of sultry weather which brought a welcome relief. In the cool of the morning we gathered together in the *Mandir* for our congregational prayer. Pandit Hazariprasad Dwivedi recited appropriate Vedic hymns and Adhyapaka Netaibinode Goswami read out one of Gurudeva's birthday addresses. A party for the children was held later in the afternoon at Uttarayana. More than one hundred boys and girls of the asrama, some of them mere toddlers, joined the party. They thoroughly enjoyed their refreshment of 'sweet rice'; some had their faces smeared with the stuff and great enthusiasm prevailed. We hope such parties will become an annual feature of the birthday celebrations. A programme of songs and recitations was gone through in the evening in front of *Udichi*. All the various items had some bearing on the auspicious day and were rendered to perfection.

Gurudeva's birthday anniversary was also observed by our ex-students in Calcutta and Bombay. A pleasant function of songs and recitations was arranged in Calcutta at the residence of Sudhiranjan Das and was largely attended by the local members of the alumni. In Bombay a performance of Natir Puja (Worship of the Dancing Girl) was given with great success under the auspices of the local Tagore Society.

...

It is extremely regrettable that owing to paper scarcity we are finding it difficult to keep pace with the public demand for the works of Gurudeva. *Rabindra Rachanavali* (complete works of Rabindranath) of which so far fifteen separate volumes have been issued, has already run into more than one edition. Those of the public who are trying to get together the entire set (issued so far) are finding it no easy matter to do so, many of the back-numbers being out of print at present. They need have no misgivings, however, on that score, because those numbers are being reprinted and re-issued with as little delay as possible. Needless to say, the same difficulty applies also in the case of the separate works of which no less than twenty reprints were issued in the past few months. Several other titles are in

the press. As soon as they are ready the fact will be notified in the press.

...

Part IV of Volume VIII, *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*, has just been published. The contents include an article on *Woman* by Gurudeva; English translation of two of his later poems; *Folk Songs of Gujarat* by Zaverchand Meghani; *Persian Wit and Humour* by Prof. Hadi Hasan; *Tales of Four Friends* by Pramatha Chaudhuri (English translation of his famous Bengali novel, *Char Yari Katha*, continued from the previous issue); *Technique of Wall Painting* by Jibendra Kumar Guha; *Civilization and Literature* by Nagendranath Chakravarty—an article based on notes taken of a lecture delivered by Gurudeva; *An Appreciation of NATIR PUJA* by K. R. Kripalani. Four full-page reproductions of the fresco illustrating *Natir Puja* (on the wall of the China-Bhavana) executed by Nandalal Bose add to the interest of this issue. There are also several reviews of important recent publications.

...

The second book of the *Visva-vidya Samgraha* (knowledge of the world) series entitled *Kutir Silpa* (Cottage Industries) by S. Rajsekhar Bose, has just been issued. The book is priced at six annas. The contents are as follows: Choice of an Industry; Provision and Confectionery; Cotton and Leather Goods; Metal Things; Carpentry Products; Paper-made Articles; Earthenware; Glassware; Cement Concrete Things; Toilette Articles; Toys; Miscellaneous Crafts and Industries; and Marketing of Goods.

The author does not deal with technicali-

ties, his whole aim is to discuss the practical possibilities of certain industries, which may be turned into useful and profitable propositions. Those interested in promoting such industries as require very little by way of labour and capital and yet may find an easy market—will greatly benefit from the suggestions made.

The third book of the series, namely, *Bharater Sanskriti* (Culture of India) by Pandit Kshitimohan Sen is awaiting publication.

...

A long life dedicated to the service of healing the sick, a life rich in activities calculated to advance the regeneration of our national life, was brought to a close with the passing away of Sir Nilratan Sircar at Giridih on May 18.

In common with all our countrymen we share in the loss and grief sustained by the relatives and friends of Sir Nilratan and with them pay our respectful homage to his memory. The Visva-Bharati has lost in him an ardent friend and well-wisher. A life-long friend of Gurudeva, Sir Nilratan was closely associated with our Institution as a Life Trustee of the Visva-Bharati Trust. His death removes one of the most outstanding figures of contemporary India and there is nobody who can worthily fill the place left vacant by him. May his soul rest in peace.

...

We are happy to learn that the publications of the Visva-Bharati have been having an excellent market during the past few months. The total sale in the Granthana Bibhaga reached the extremely satisfactory figure of Rs. 55,000/- for the first quarter.

(Continued on page 166)

Rabindranath Tagore in Brussels *

Messengers with news from other lands greet me and pass along the road.—GITANJALI.

Twenty-one years ago, in this very journal, *Le Thyrsé*, the Hindu priest, Brahmachari Bodha Bhikshu, wrote as follows : "Hindus are very reserved in nature : they open their hearts only to those who are in sympathy with them." This avowal came back to our minds, not without some apprehension, on the evening of October 4th, 1920. For, around us, preparations were being made only to receive, perhaps, a similar confession. Everything was in a bustle of confusion, in anticipation of an extraordinary event. Busy people, in spite of their indifference about such matters on ordinary occasions, were seen in dense numbers squeezing themselves against the railings of the Palais de Justice where the gathering was to be held.

From eight o'clock, a heaving sea of faces could be observed extending along the marble passages leading to the Court Room. Not a seat in the Court itself was vacant. Tables, window-sills,—even the steps of the platform were all occupied by spectators. The eager, but silent, crowd was swelling more and more each moment.

What figure were they expecting ? Whom was the President going to ask to address the meeting, when he rose with his usual phrases and gestures to introduce the Lecturer ?

Curiosity made the audience slightly impatient and betrayed the western spirit only thinly veiled and cloaked for the occasion.

Then an aged man rose from his seat. There was a pause.

At the furthest end of the wooden semi-circular barrier, within which the distances were strictly preserved, a dignified and stately figure stood up before the rows of barristers and judges. He let fall his eye glasses, which remained loosely hanging like a star on his ample mauve coloured robe.

A face like that of Christ, bronzed, serene and superb, came into view. Now there were no more rows of judges, no more individual men ; there was one common humanity, all attentive. High over them was the commanding form of the Poet, with his white beard and his white flowing hair.

Rabindranath Tagore read his message in English. It was entitled, "The Meeting of the East and the West"—"*Le rencontre de l'Orient et de l'Occident*".

From the wide sleeves of his robe there emerged a hand, full of expression and at times closed, which tightly rested on the railing. His movements were rare, but each one had touch of character. His courtesy had a scrupulous exactness that made it almost religiously refined. At times, the fingers of his hand would open and slowly describe an image in the air. Then again they would close and softly move over the desk-stand in front of the speaker. I have witnessed such solemn movements while listening to the dance music of Hindustan.

The right hand alone was used for giving expression. The left hand held a number of loose leaves of manuscript, tied together at one corner by a string. This messenger from other shores had an admirable command over the language he uttered. He chanted at times some of his Bengali songs. As we listened to him we seemed transported into the

* We are glad to reproduce here (in part) English translation of an impression by a French writer M. Gaston Denys Revier of a lecture delivered by Gurudeva in Paris in 1920.

open air and sky of Nature herself—to the very threshold of the Poet's own far-off retreat at Bolpur.

Then again, the voice of the speaker would be raised high, only to become soft once more with a cadence full of pathos,—far different in effect from the pathos of our dramatic artists at the *Comedie Francaise*. There was nothing that could bear resemblance to our own melodramatic ways,—nothing also of the excited orations of Hyde Park. There were none of those pauses at expected places. At the close of each succession of long, limpid sentences, there would start afresh another series. The voice of the Hindu sounded clear and distinct,—it spoke the Truth. Everyone could follow the words spoken, from the farthest end of the Hall to the platform itself.

In a touching comparison, this Christ of India traced the course of the West,—flowing side by side without ever meeting ; for oppression prevents communion. The Poet depicted the superficial vandalism which the English masters have inflicted upon the age-long untouched beauties of the Ganges. Discarding at this point all metaphorical expressions, which would only glaze over the very evils they are meant to describe, he made use of direct and plain language, as he set forth the wrongs done by the destructive methods of Western Imperialism.

The Western exploiter of the East, travelling in first class carriages, carrying with him his portmanteaus and his prejudices, holding fast his false notions of "superiority", fondly imagines that he has gained his object by officialism and circulars. But the latter are not even read by the Eastern people ; for they give orders, they do not speak to the heart.

Where there is no mutual confidence, how can one ever hope to attain to goodwill among men ? The peoples of the world must be first sincere towards one another. This sincerity should be a potent influence from within. Nothing can be done by means of an organisation imposed from without, hypocrisy written all over its surface. Heart must speak to heart. The only creative work is that of Love.

This is the outline of the doctrine, which the Poet Sage from Bengal is intent to spread everywhere as the surest means to awaken the hitherto divided and oppressed world of humanity and to bind it into a union of brotherhood and freedom. No longer should conventional ideas of ruler and ruled regulate the ordinances of the children of mankind.

"Be afraid," he said, "to leave them to their weakness. The very strength of that weakness passively threatens to make a barrier to civilisation and to compromise that Peace to which the Universe aspires."

The aged Poet then sat down at the extreme end of the semi-circle, to listen for a while to a speech which followed and in no way disturbed the harmony of our rapt meditation at the close of the lecture.

As we crossed the threshold, leaving the hall, where East and West had exchanged thoughts of love together, we seemed to read on the porch the one word written :

"Shantiniketan"—"The Home of Peace".

Rabindranath Through Cambridge Eyes

By K. R. KRIPALANI

TURNING over the pages of THE CONCISE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE by George Sampson (Cambridge University Press, 1941), I came across a chapter on "Anglo-Indian Literature." I was curious to see what the learned author had to say of it. Here are some statements selected at random. "English is a medium of literary expression for the educated Indian . . . " After delivering this dictum which, by implication, relegates the use of an Indian language as a medium of literary expression to perhaps only the uneducated Indian, the author goes on to trace the history of Anglo-Indian Literature. "Anglo-Indian Literature begins with the unimportant letters of Father Thomas Stephens who went to Goa in 1579 and was the first Englishman to settle in India." It is gratifying to learn that this Anglo-Indian Pilgrim Father laid the foundation of Anglo-Indian Literature long before Shakespeare conceived his first drama or Bacon his first essay. He was succeeded by a host of other luminaries. But "of special interest is John Zephaniah Holwell, a survivor of the Black Hole, who wrote a 'Narrative of the Deplorable Deaths of the English Gentlemen who were suffocated in the Black Hole.' " It is a pity that the learned Cambridge scholar has not considered the claim of this remarkable predecessor of Sir Walter Scott as the first writer of fiction in Anglo-Indian Literature. It is even a greater pity that the learned author of THE CONCISE OXFORD DICTIONARY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE, published in 1939, has not included the name of either Holwell or Stephens in his encyclopaedia of literary names. Nor has he mentioned the name of William Browne Hockley whose "Tales of the Zenana or a Nawab's Leisure Hours" the Cambridge scholar has compared to the ARABIAN NIGHTS. Cambridge scholarship apparently goes deeper than the Oxford.

Apropos of the introduction of English education in India, the author writes : "Those who, at the safe distance of a century, call Macaulay's policy disastrous, have no sense of perspective. That Macaulay cared nothing for the languages, religions and literature of India *is true, but not to the point*" (italics ours). This is not the first time that an Englishman has reminded us that what is true is not to the point. Let us then hear what is to the point. "To offer educated Indians the culture of English gentlemen was a noble gesture ; to offer them an exclusively oriental education would have seemed an attempt to perpetuate their subjection." How sad to know that, in spite of the attempts of English gentlemen *not* to perpetuate our subjection, we have not responded adequately to their "noble gesture" ! It is dreadful to contemplate what would have happened to us had not Macaulay, in a fit of imperial generosity, thrust upon "educated Indians the culture of English gentlemen". We would have continued to remain Indians and barbarians and our subjection would have been perpetuated. Not only that. Our very native culture would have degenerated and died out but for the fostering care of English education. "The

adoption of English as the language of the Universities had the unexpected and desirable result of revivifying the vernaculars." And "Stimulated by English literature and English knowledge, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, the first graduate of Calcutta University, created Bengali fiction." This reminds us of what Rabindranath Tagore said on this point in his answer to Miss Rathbone's letter. "She is scandalised," he wrote, "at our ingratitude,—that having 'drunk deeply at the wells of English thought', we should still have some thought left for our poor country's interests. English thought, in so far as it is representative of the best traditions of western enlightenment, has indeed taught us much, but, let me add, that those of our countrymen who have profited by it have done so despite the official British attempts to ill educate us. We might have achieved introduction to western learning through any other European language. Have all the other peoples in the world waited for the British to bring them enlightenment? It is sheer insolent self-complacency on the part of our so-called English friends to assume that had they not 'taught' us we would still have remained in the dark ages. Through the official British channels of education in India have flowed to our children in schools, not the best of English thought, but its refuse, which has only deprived them of a wholesome repast at the table of their own culture. Assuming, however, that English language is the only channel left to us for 'enlightenment', all that drinking deeply at its wells has come to is that in 1931 only about 1 per cent of the population was found to be literate in English,—while in the U. S. S. R. in 1932, after only fifteen years of Soviet administration, 98 per cent of the children were educated."

But though we Indians may take the words of Rabindranath seriously and even attach weight to his opinions, the Cambridge scholars have no such illusion as to Rabindranath's merit. For, according to them, this Anglo-Indian poet (a creation of Father Thomas Stephens, John Zephaniah Holwell and Thomas Babington Macaulay, rather than of any Indian ancestry) is neither deep nor original. Here is the full estimate :

"More generally famous than either (Monmohan Ghose and Aravindo Ghose) is Rabindranath Tagore (1861); but his position in English literature is less secure, for he is a Bengali poet who has translated his verses into English prose. With the value of his native compositions we are not concerned; but of his English prose-poems we are compelled to say that their absolute worth can easily be exaggerated. Indeed, it is difficult to find in his numerous volumes—*GITANJALI* (1912), *THE CRESCENT MOON* (1913), *FRUIT GATHERING* (1916), *THE GARDENER* and others—anything richer in thought and expression than the pages of the English Bible afford to the receptive reader. The great popularity of Tagore as a prose-poet can be explained by the general appetite for moral reflections not too deep, with an Eastern setting, not too remote."

We have no quarrel with this Cambridge savant over his estimate of Rabindranath Tagore's worth. We are unperturbed by it and even amused by it, even as we have often been when other English pontiffs have referred to Gandhiji as a crank, or to

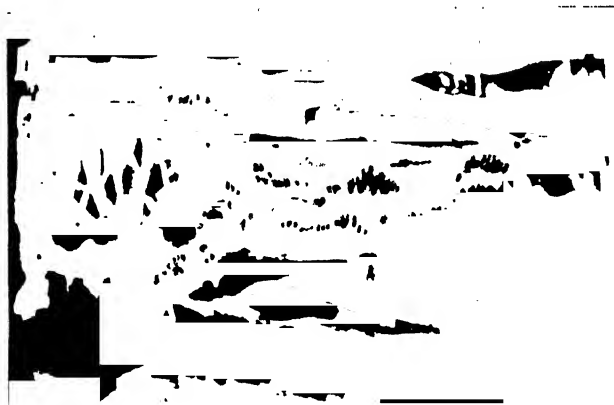
Buddha as a moral escapist, to Sankaracharya as a muddle-headed confusionist, or to Sri Krishna as an over-sexed debauchee. They have a right to their judgments, even as we have a right to judge them by their judgments, though we hardly ever exercise that right. Whether Rabindranath's position in English literature is secure or not does not concern us in the least. What does concern and amuse us is the effrontery of ignorant English scholarship that quietly and without any argument or apology appropriates him as an Anglo-Indian poet. Not a single poem in the four books mentioned in the passage quoted above was written directly in English; nor did any Fitzgerald render it in the language of English gentlemen. If the mere misfortune of translating his works into English renders an Indian poet liable to be judged as an Anglo-Indian poet, then must we congratulate the shades of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky for having been spared the honour of being listed as Anglo-Russian novelists and Goethe and Heine as Anglo-German poets. The author's warning to his English readers not to look in Tagore's pages for "anything richer in thought and expression than the pages of the English Bible afford to the receptive reader" is very surprising; since we were not aware of this new standard of judging literary merit. Nor were we aware of there being any danger of Tagore's works ever being regarded as an alternative to the English Bible. Or is the statement intended as an insinuation that Tagore took his thoughts from the English Bible? Those who had voted for the award of the Nobel Prize to him had apparently not read their Bible well. But this reminds us that, though the erudite Cambridge author has shown much originality in measuring the depth of Tagore's moral reflections and the remoteness or otherwise of his Eastern setting, he has forgotten to refer to the award of the Nobel Prize. It was, we presume, too insignificant a matter to interest his attention.

The reader might imagine that since the Cambridge scholar is so liberal in his outlook as to include in his list Indian authors whose works have been translated into English, he must also have considered American authors whose works were originally written in the language of English gentlemen. But he will hunt the volume in vain for a reference to Emerson, or Thoreau or Whitman or Lewis or Sinclair—all of whom find due place in THE CONCISE OXFORD DICTIONARY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE. But there are interesting chapters on "Anglo-Irish Literature", "English-Canadian Literature", "The Literature of Australia", and "South African Literature". Had some silly, hot-headed patriots not misbehaved in Boston in 1773, American poets and novelists would have been honoured with a separate chapter in this volume from Cambridge, under the title of "Anglo-American" or "English-American" Literature or simply as "The Literature of America", according, presumably, to the standing of their country in the code of imperial values. For it seems that only the Indian and the Irish may be *Anglo-ed*, but not the Canadian, or the Australian or the South African.

However, we are not interested in these niceties of imperial preference. What we object to is the inclusion of Rabindranath Tagore as an Anglo-Indian poet. He was a

Bengali poet who drew inspiration from his native soil and from the heritage of India and who lived and wrote for his countrymen. Several of his books have been translated, not in English only but in most languages of the world. If he was influenced by English thought and English literary forms, the influence was considerably less than the influence of the Italian renaissance on Shakespeare and other Elizabethan writers. Cambridge pandits would do well to spare him their patronage. His place in the hearts of his countrymen and in the literary history of his own land is secure, and he needs neither a niche in the Westminster Abbey nor a paragraph in Histories of English Literature to add one whit to his immortality. If English Universities must include in their Histories of English Literature chapters on Anglo-Indian Literature, it is their concern. But we may suggest that they might also add to their Histories of English Political Thought a chapter on Anglo-Indian Political Thought, and include in it the speeches of the Right Honourables the various Secretaries of State for India and their Excellencies the Viceroys and Governors of India, as well as the general principles underlying the host of Special Ordinances. Read along with the speeches of Burke and Fox, they would at least have the merit of showing the evolution of English political thought,—which is something more than Anglo-Indian Literature can claim.

As to the psychological, sociological and political motives that might be read into the literary canons and judgments of the book under discussion, we are content to leave it to the researches of the learned author of "Rabindranath through Western Eyes", who will no doubt discuss it in the next edition of his book.



Ramananda Jayanti

We are deeply concerned to learn that for a long time now Sj. Ramananda Chatterji has not been keeping the best of health. Although his advanced age and weak state of health do not permit him actively to take part in the affairs of the Institution just now, we would like to take this opportunity to record our gratitude and appreciation for the long and faithful service he has rendered to the Visva-Bharati in the past. He is a Pradhana of the Institution and also a member of our Samsad (Governing Body). From very early in the history of the Visva-Bharati, he has been associated with its manifold activities. He always gave his ungrudging co-operation to Gurudeva in bringing the ideals of the Visva-Bharati nearer to fulfilment.

On Sunday, May 30, a deputation of some important office bearers and members of the Visva-Bharati, including Rathindranath Tagore, Debendramohan Bose, Kshitimohan Sen, Nepal Chandra Roy, Sudhir Kumar Lahiri, Charuchandra Bhattacharya and others visited Dr. Kalidas Nag's Calcutta residence, where Sj. Chatterji is lying ill, in order to pay their homage of respect to him on behalf of the Visva-Bharati.

The ceremony of felicitation commenced with Pandit Kshitimohan Sen chanting appropriate Vedic hymns wishing Sj. Ramananda Chatterji long life, health and happiness. Rathindranath Tagore then read out a congratulatory message from our Acharyadeva which ran as follows :

"On behalf of all of us in the Visva-Bharati I would like to take this occasion to convey my sincerest respect and gratitude to Sj. Ramananda Chatterji, one of the most genuine well-wishers of our Institution, on the occasion of the Jayanti celebrations held in his honour. May he be spared to us for many more years and may he continue to inspire us in our work and give us help and guidance in bringing the noble ideals of Gurudeva nearer to fulfilment. Whether in rendering selfless service to his country, or in fostering and promoting art and culture, his many contributions to all the departments of life mark him out as a man of sterling honesty and single-minded earnestness. It adds to one's merit merely to come across a man of such moral courage and integrity ; to have him for a friend and co-operator is an honour and a privilege. We consider ourselves lucky to have him as such and by felicitating and honouring him on this auspicious occasion we do honour to ourselves."

Sj. Ramananda Chatterji was greatly moved by the felicitations offered him and, in spite of his weak state of health, made the following short reply :

"I am deeply touched by the message of love and goodwill which you have brought to me on behalf of the Visva-Bharati. It has overwhelmed me and I find no words to express my gratitude and thanks. Ever since the founding of the Visva-Bharati I have been trying my very best to serve the Poet in the realisation of the ideals which he had placed before us. If I recover from my illness, may God give me the strength and

desire to continue to serve the Visva-Bharati. My association with the Poet has been one of my greatest privileges. Unworthy as I am he had blessed me with the gift of his friendship and this fact will remain for me an abiding source of joy.

"Although it is slightly out of place, I cannot overcome the temptation to mention here a little fact. I am given to understand that there is a move on the part of the public to hold a Jayanti celebration in my honour. The sponsors have received several letters from important people signifying their desire to co-operate with them in order to make the function a success. The other day a few of these letters were shown to me. Among them was a letter from Rathindranath which touched me to the depths of my heart. He speaks there of the many personal ties of love and affection that bind me to him. My heart goes out to him and I pray that he may be given the strength to shoulder the heavy responsibilities which have devolved on him.

"I find many of my sincere friends and well-wishers here, Nepal Babu and Kshiti Babu and others. Their presence by my sick-bed has given me much joy and I now thank them, one and all, for the felicitations they have offered me."

(Continued from page 168)

We hope this steady improvement will continue to be maintained.

...

The Acharya left the asrama for his Baranagore home on May 19. He will stay there for the summer and return to Santiniketan before the commencement of the rains.

...

The Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath Mondal, Minister, Co-operative Credit and Rural Indebtedness Departments, Government of Bengal, paid a visit to Bolpur on May 22 last, accompanied by Khan Bahadur Chowdhury Afsar Ali, Registrar of Co operative Societies, and other officers.

In the afternoon of the same day the Hon'ble Minister laid the foundation stone of the proposed premises of the Central Co-operative Bank at Sriniketan. An address of welcome was presented to him by Charu Chandra Bhattacharya on behalf of the Bank and its affiliated Societies. Tarakchandra Dhar, one of the Directors of the Bank,

stressed on the needs of Co-operative organisations.

In course of his reply to the address the Hon'ble Minister paid homage to Gurudeva, the founder of Santiniketan and Sriniketan, which, he said, had proved to be the source of so many beneficial activities. He then dwelt on the food problem and assured the audience that given the co-operation of the people, Government would do all that is possible to mitigate the sufferings of the needy and the poor. He also remarked that Government would arrange to advance short-term loans to Co-operative Societies for growing more food crops and generally improving their economic condition.

On May 23 the Hon'ble Minister attended the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Santiniketan Samavaya Bhandar. Khan Bahadur Chowdhury Afsar Ali opened the function with an inaugural speech, in course of which he dwelt on the difficulties of setting up efficient Co-operative organisations and gave valuable suggestions and advice in

that regard. The Hon'ble Minister left the same afternoon.

...

Our Acharyadeva opened the Sri Rup Manjari Primary School at Goalpara on May 5. Ever since Goalpara came within the 'intensive' area of the Rural Welfare Department of Sriniketan it has been making great strides in reconstruction work, especially in the matter of social welfare, education and sanitation.

Our Acharyadeva was given a guard-of-honour by the village Brati-Balaka Troop. Sj. Dwijapada Chatterji, the donor of the school, was introduced to our Acharyadeva who warmly thanked him for his generosity and spirit of service.

...

A new Co-operative Health Society has been organised at the Situlpur-Darpara centre by the Sriniketan Village Welfare Department. The centre was formally opened by Anil Kumar Chanda, Adhyaksha, Siksha-Bhavana, on May 7 before a large gathering of village people.

...

Buddha Purnima was duly observed at Sriniketan on May 17. An interesting programme of songs and readings from Gurudeva was arranged on the occasion.

...

A Night School for Harijans has been started at Surul village some time ago. Rajyeswar Debnath, a senior student of the Siksha Charcha Bhavana, has taken charge of the School.

...

The *Visva Bharati Patrika* (Jaistha issue) which has duly made its appearance contains a fare of varied interest as usual. The opening article is from the pen of Atul Chandra Gupta who discourses on the ideals of Visva Bharati and Gurudeva's aim in creating such an institution. Acharya Abanindranath follows up with another story in his inimitable *Abu-mashima* series. Suresh Chandra Chakravarti of Pondicherry defends the "Ivory Tower" from the onslaught of a certain school of critics. Bimal Chandra Sinha of Paikpara discusses in this issue Gurudeva's *Balaka* and its significance in the series of his latter day productions. The address delivered by Sm. Indira Devi Chaudhurani in presiding over the Women's Protection Society is printed in this issue; as also the introduction by Pramatha Chaudhuri to an edition of Bharat Chandra's poems.

...

Alumni News

We convey our hearty congratulations to Apurvakumar Chanda, an ex-student, who has been appointed Principal, Presidency College, from April, 1943. Sj. Chanda is a sitting member of the Samsad.

...

We regret to announce the death of Hrishikesh Sinha who was a student of Santiniketan in its early days. He died of heart failure on May 26 at the age of 50. Sj. Sinha was better known to his friends as 'Mamu'. His cordial behaviour won him many friends who will mourn the loss.

...

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